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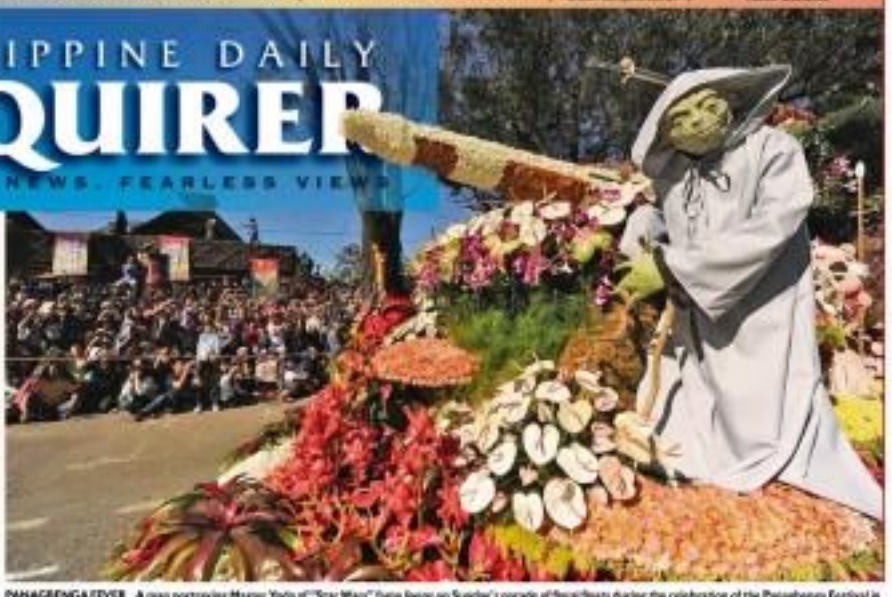

'Panagbenga is symbol of rise of Baguio'

By Desiree Caluza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—The parade of floral floats in the 17th Panagbenga (Baguio Flower Festival) impressed Tourism Secretary Ramon Jimenez Jr. so much that he wanted to encourage everyone to plant flowers.

"Panagbenga is the symbol of the rise of Baguio," Jimenez said, extolling the summer capital to aspire for the title of Asia's flower capital.

"We should encourage people to plant more flowers not only during [the months leading to the celebration of] Panagbenga but also [throughout the year, so that] when

PANAGBENGA / A19

PANAGBENGA FEVER. A man portraying Master Yoda of "Star Wars" fame livens up Sunday's parade of floral floats during the celebration of the Panagbenga Festival in Baguio City. Tourists camped out at Session Road as early as 6 a.m. to ensure a good view of the parade.

Row over testimony of SC justice looms

It's up to Naguiat to quit or go on leave

By Christine O. Avendaño, Dianne L. Lucas and Gil C. Cabacungan

IT'S UP to Cristina Naguiat Jr., chair of the state-owned Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor), to heed calls for him to resign or go on leave while being investigated for receiving luxurious perks from Japanese gambling magnate Kazuo Okada, Malacañang yesterday said.

This is the Palace stand wherever such calls are made on government officials involved in controversies, according to President Aquino's deputy spokesperson, Abigail Valte. She

PALACE / A13

People power for 1-man rule

By Amando Doronila

THE FIRST Filipino People Power revolution broke out at 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 22, 1986, at Camp Aguinaldo, headquarters of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, with a military revolt led by Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos, AFP deputy chief of staff and Philippine Constabulary chief, against the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship.

ANALYSIS

The revolt ignited a mass civil uprising that ended without shedding blood 14 years of oppression, corruption and abuses of the Marcos regime.

PEOPLE POWER / A21

CLOSE ENCOUNTER. Supreme Court Justice Ma. Lourdes Sereno (right) with President Aquino and Chief Justice Renato Corona after her oath-taking at Malacañang in this photo taken in 2010.

Issue up in caucus of Senate

By Christian V. Esguerra

WILL ASSOCIATE Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno's testimony end up with Supreme Court justices washing their dirty linen in public?

Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago yesterday cautioned against the prosecution's insistence to have Sereno appear as its witness in the impeachment trial of Chief Justice Renato Corona.

"Even if she's willing to testify alone, it would be a slippery slope. It would open the door for other Supreme Court justices appearing in an impeachment trial over one person or another," Santiago told the inquirer in a phone interview.

ROW OVER / A21

Too early to see guilty verdict, says prosecution / A21

No seafood splurge in Lent, says bishop

By Jocelyn R. Uy

IN THIS season of Lent, go easy on seafood, too.

Archbishop Emeritus Oscar Cruz gave this advice to Filipino Catholics, noting that while many of them do abstain from eating meat, some make up for it by splurging on crabs, lobsters, shrimps and other

NO SEAFOODS / A12

With Skyway, QC just 6 minutes from Makati

By Dianne L. Lucas

IMAGINE driving home at the end of a long working day during rush hour and traveling from Makati to certain parts of Quezon City in only six minutes. From Buendia to Balintawak, it will just be 10 minutes.

Motorists may soon be able to enjoy these drastically shortened travel times if the Aquino administration gives the go-ahead for the building of a six-lane elevated highway from Buendia (now called Gil Puyat Avenue) in Makati to Balintawak in Quezon City through the heart of the metropolis.

Documents obtained by the Inquirer show that a Skyway-style project is being proposed by Circ-PNCC (Philippine National Construction Corp.) as part of the concessions awarded to it when it built the overhead Skyway system along South Superhighway from Buendia to Bicutan in Parañaque City. The group finished the second leg from Bicutan to

WITH SKYWAY / A23

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LEARNING **Let** The Lorax speak for the trees ... / H1

METRO **Frat** leader faces raps in hazing death / A25

WORLD **Court** junks bribery case vs Berlusconi / A27

NEWS **Who's in** the money? Only Oscar knows for sure / A10

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

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6/42: 20 14 29 30 14 7

6/49 SUPERLOTTO: 3 3 3 6 7 5

6/55 GRAND LOTTO: 7 4 2

6/45 SUPER LOTTO 6/45: 3 14 27 30 36 46

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DFA: No to joint dev't with China

By Jerry E. Esplanada

THE JOINT development of areas in the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea) that "are clearly ours is not a viable solution" to our problem with China, according to Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario.

As for the potentially contentious fact-finding group of islands, the Philippines is "open to considering joint development in the disputed areas," Del Rosario told the Senate yesterday.

Del Rosario said that during his meeting last week with Wang Yingfan and Wang Chunjai, two former Chinese ambassadors to the Philippines who were here on a goodwill visit, the "informal exchanges" that we can open to inviting China to the Batoc Bank are an invitation to be governed by local laws."

The Batoc Bank (Reed Bank), he pointed out, was an "integral part of the Philippines and, as such, cannot be jointly developed."

"To do so would be a violation of our Constitution," he said.

The Batoc Bank had drawn China's interest several months ago when the Philippine Air Force discovered several Chinese vessels in its vicinity.

Other option

At another session, Del Rosario said "we again asked if China would join us in avoiding of the dispute settlement mechanism under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea," or Unclos.

He said he told his guests the government was "endeavoring [to look at all means to arrive at a peaceful solution of the disputes in the West Philippine Sea in accordance with international law, specifically Unclos."

Apart from China's suggestion that the Philippines revisit the concept of joint development of the Spratlys, the two sides also discussed "how both nations can advancing our bilateral agenda while treading contentious issues especially, and the view that we should not accept all that appears in the press as being factual," Del Rosario said.

According to the secretary, the retired ambassadors were "very appreciative [they] came to enhance our friendship and cooperation."

Earlier, he told this paper that "their visit serves to put substance to the initiative [of China and the Philippines] on friendly visits."

During President Aquino's state visit to Beijing last August, both sides declared 2012 and 2013 the "Years of Friendly Exchanges" between the two Asian neighbors.

Set aside quarrel

On Wednesday, Wang Ying Fan told a media forum organized by the Chinese Embassy that the Philippine government should consider the "Deng Xiaoping Solution" to the Spratlys dispute, that is, setting aside the territorial quarrel in favor of a joint exploration and development of the disputed waters.

Wang, who served in Manila from 1998 to 1999, insisted "it is time for cooperation, not confrontation, not fighting."

He said he had "talked with people in the government that we should work hard to find ways that are acceptable to both sides, that we must work hard to prepare the ground so that we could share the resources together."

According to Wang, the solution for get "win-win encouraging. They said they would consider this kind of thinking. So with patience, with goodwill and with hard work, we could find a way out that's agreeable and acceptable to both sides."

Wang also advised Filipinos to "spend your energy on economic development."

He said it would be sometime before the two Spratly claimants could find a solution to the dispute.

Wang also warned the Philippines against bringing the United States into the equation, saying this would be unacceptable to China which would "certainly react" if that happened.

Wang stressed that allowing the US to meddle in the situation "is like you invite a tiger over your bed story. "That would make the issues more complicated and more difficult to settle among ourselves," he said.

The Philippines and China claim all or part of the Spratlys along with Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei.

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Latest ruling keeps Banco Filipino shut

By Marlon Ramos

WHICH is which?

Earlier this month, the Court of Appeals declared the closure of Banco Filipino (BF) illegal and ordered the Monetary Board (MB) to reopen three ex-Filipino Savings and Mortgage Bank and give it a P25-billion financial rehabilitation package.

Now, a ruling by another division of the appellate court seems to say just the opposite.

The latest ruling from the court's former Special 10th Division denied a motion to reconsider an October 2011 ruling overturning Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Joselito Villarama's temporary restraining order (TRO) on the closure of Banco Filipino and directing the MB to support the bank's rehabilitation plan: business and recovery plan.

The latest ruling, penned by Associate Justice Rodrigo Addul-wahid, said the court can no longer reverse the earlier ruling that found the Makati judge to have committed grave abuse of discretion and dismissed "caduc basis" given by to issue a TRO on Dec. 28, 2010, which barred the BSP from performing its regulatory functions over the bank.

Associate Justices Noel Tijam and Romeo Brawner concurred in the ruling, saying that Villarama had no jurisdiction over the case.

"For lack of jurisdiction, the (Makati court) is ordered to stop and desist from continuing with the proceedings...other than to dismiss the said case," the court ruled.

Banco Filipino had argued that it was entitled to 5-year-old assistance based on a 1991 Supreme Court decision which ordered the reopening and reorganization of Banco Filipino after its closure in 1985.

The BSP and the Monetary Board had sought the appellate court's intervention.

Abdulwahid wrote: "To be sure, the Supreme Court did not intend to distort how Banco Filipino should be reorganized and what the BSP should do under the premises in the process or reorganizing (the bank)."

The new ruling, dated Feb. 14, comes barely two weeks after the court's former Special 14th Division ordered the BSP to reopen Banco Filipino and provide the P25-billion rehabilitation fund. In that decision, Justice Agnes Reyes-Carpio ruled that the closure of Banco Filipino by the BSP was illegal. Concurring justices were Vicente Veloso and Normandie Pizarro.

The Special 14th Division had ordered the BSP to release funds to Banco Filipino within 30 days, saying the central bank and the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. committed grave abuse of discretion and violated BF's right to due process when they placed the bank under receivership.

The BSP placed Banco Filipino under receivership on March 17, 2011, after it was reported to be insolvent.

Banco Filipino claimed it became insolvent due to the BSP's failure to release its rehabilitation fund and the publicity it generated.

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Gov't to hike coconut sugar exports

THE PHILIPPINES intends to be aggressive in exporting coconut sap (coco) sugar as it bids to get a major share in the $1 billion dollar alternative sweetener market, according to Agriculture Secretary Proceso Alcala.

"In tandem with the private sector, we are crafting a master plan to promote coconut sap sugar overseas and win a big share of the $1.1-billion global alternative sweetener market," Alcala said.

Next month, stakeholders, farmers and Department of Agriculture (DA) officials will hold consultations on the master plan and move to create a system to safeguard the coconut sap sugar industry through product quality certification, the DA said.

Healthier

According to DA studies, coco sugar is a better and healthier alternative to refined sugar that would appeal to diabetics and health buffs.

The country started exporting the product to the United States in 2007 after proving that coconut sap sugar has a low glycemic index (GI) or IG. Any sugar-based product is considered low when its GI is 54 or under. The GI is an indicator of how fast carbohydrates convert to glucose in the blood or how fast carbohydrates turn into sugar.

A certification system would ensure the quality and authenticity of the product as a genuine coconut sap sugar, according to the DA. Unscrupulous traders have been known to mix coconut sap sugar with processed, brown sugar-cane based sugar, it said.

Competition

Only Thailand and Indonesia compete with the Philippines in the production of coco sugar, according to agriculture officials. They believe the Philippines has an advantage because its coconuts are better in quality.

Vigorous marketing of coco sugar would help the Philippines outweigh or be bold on being the top exporter of coconut products in the world.

In 2011, the country's coconut exports reached almost $2 billion with the bulk of earnings coming from coconut oil.

Coconut water export jumped 111 percent in the first half of the year to 7.4 million liters after the beverage started to become hugely popular overseas, the government said. Rivaline L. Rivera

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From left to right: Ana Manuela Rolandez (DOLE Phils.), Greg Dong T. Lim (Super Trade), Enrique Fernando (DOLE Phils.), Cecilio "Peggy" Montemayor (DOLE Phils.) with Cesar Monforte, Jr. (Super Trade)

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Mr. Ruan Jyuki observed that there were a lot of young people in the hospital affected with the same disease and this gave him the courage to overcome his fear and willingly embraced the medical treatment. When he went home, he returned to his normal routines, forgetting that he was even a cancer patient. Currently he is leading a good and peaceful life.

Prof. Ping Xiancai of Guangzhou Medical Cancer Hospital emphasized that liver cancer, like the other types of cancer should be treated as early as possible to ensure a high rate of treatment success. A standardized comprehensive treatment is the key to improve the survival rate of the cancer patients and most importantly, the patient should not miss out on the treatment period. He likewise adds that in recent years, the radioactive seed implantation also known as "particle seed" or "body y seed" is the new method of cancer treatment that uses radiation therapy from the inside of the body of the patient. It is the micro radioactive source that is implanted within the tumor tissue that sends a constant low-energy of radiation and kills the tumor cells.

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Manila traffic advisory

MANILA) for very heavy traffic, the Manila city government has issued an advisory for motorists on the typhoon or Crisis Grand Evangelical Mission at Rizal Park on Tuesday.

Though the event won't start until 5 p.m., Katigbak Drive, South Drive and Independence Road will be closed to traffic beginning at noon.

Motorists are advised to take Taft Avenue to get in and from Jones Bridge, Macarthur Bridge or Quezon Bridge, and Quirino Avenue to get to or from Nagtahan Bridge.

Parking areas have been designated—for VIPs by the north wing of the Quirino Grandstand, while those with car passes can park on Ilaods Drive from Roxas Boulevard to Independence Road.

Those can park on one lane of Roxas Boulevard from P. Burgos to G Gramps Streets, on one lane of Bonifacio Drive from 25th Street to Anda Circle, or at the PICC complex and Parc Ilark.

Light vehicles can park on one lane of TM. Kalaw Street between Roxas Boulevard and Maria Orosa Street, on the Roxas Boulevard service road from TM. Kalaw to P. Burgos, between Roxas Boulevard and Maria Orosa, and on the northbound lane of Bonifacio Drive between 25th Street and Anda Circle. Jayson T. Ismael

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Aliens in PH urged to renew IDs early

By Jerome Aning

THE BUREAU of Immigration (BI) yesterday advised foreign nationals living in the country to renew their identity cards before their respective deadlines to avoid any inconvenience should they wish to travel abroad.

BI Associate Commissioner Siegfred Mison issued an advisory urging foreigners with expired alien certificates of registration identity card (ACR I-Card) at least 30 days before the date of their intended travel.

The I-Card is issued to all BI registered foreigners who are holders of immigrant and non-immigrant visas.

Mison said those aliens with pending I-Card applications would not be allowed to leave as the cards serve as their reentry permits.

Aliens who leave despite pending I-Card applications will have their reentry visas downgraded to tourist upon their return to the Philippines, he said.

Lawyer Ronaldo Ledesma, BI acting deputy commissioner for legal, said the time of returning aliens with expired I-Cards would also be downgraded to tourist.

However, Ledesma said only the "no visa required" aliens shall be allowed entry as tourists, while visa-required foreigners will be turned back as they need to secure entry visas from the Philippine consulate or their port of origin.

Ledesma advised aliens with plans to temporarily leave the Philippines to immediately renew their I-Cards.

The cards may be renewed at the BI main office in Intramuros, Manila, or at district offices in San Fernando in La Union, Aparri in Cagayan, Subic, Immigration, Legazpi, Iloilo, Cebu, Tacloban, Zamboanga, Cagayan de Oro, Davao and Davao.

The I-Card is a credit card-size ID issued to registered aliens. It has an embedded computer chip containing biometric security features.

Immigration Commissioner Ricardo David Jr. recently prescribed new guidelines for immigration officers in processing arriving and departing passengers with expiring or expired I-Cards and those with pending I-Card applications.

The guidelines may be viewed on the bureau's website (www.immigration.gov.ph).

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday—February 27, 2012
3rd Week of Lent

1st Reading: Lev 19:1-2, 11-18

Yahweh spoke to Moses and said, "Speak to the entire assembly of the people of Israel and say to them: Be holy for I, Yahweh, your God, am holy. Do not steal or lie or deceive one another. Do not swear falsely by my name or so as to profane the name of your God. I am Yahweh. Do not oppress your neighbor or rob him. ... You shall not incite a deaf mutter or put a stumbling block in the way of the blind, but you shall fear your God; I am Yahweh. Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor nor favor to the great; you are to judge your neighbor fairly as an one to share in his guilt. ... You are not to abuse or exploit your neighbor or rob him. ... You shall not nurse a deep resentment nor a trembling blush in the way of the blind, but you shall fear your God; I am Yahweh. Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor nor favor to the great; you are to judge your neighbor fairly as an one to share in his guilt. ... You are not to abuse or exploit

Being gay doesn't mean you're immoral, SC rules in judge's case

By Jovelyn Beling

A JUDGE who admitted he was gay should not be automatically presumed to be immoral, the Supreme Court (SC) has ruled.

In a decision, the Supreme Court's Second Division dismissed the administrative cases of immorality and dishonesty filed against Judge Hero Campos, the now-retired presiding judge of the municipal trial court of Bayugan City, Agusan del Sur, by his estranged wife and son.

"There was no evidence that the respondent engaged in scandalous conduct that would warrant the imposition of disciplinary action against him," the high court said in a decision penned by Associate Justice Antonio Eduardo B. Nachura.

However, the court found Campos guilty of simple misconduct and fraud him 30 days for registering his then minor son as the owner of a piece of land that figured in the couple's pending legal separation and annulment cases.

"In order to maintain the circulation, and taking advantage of his knowledge of the law, respondent caused the registration of the property in [his son's] name with the intention of defrauding a possible judgment obligee. Clearly, it was improper behavior for which warrants disciplinary sanction by this court."

The three administrative cases stemmed from the annulment case filed by Campos in July 2008, a year before he retired. In his suit he said he was a homosexual and that his wife had affairs with other men which he did not tolerate and condone.

His wife denied Campos' accusations of infidelity and claimed her husband only wanted their marriage annulled so he could marry another woman with whom he was allegedly having a relationship. She opposed the annulment and filed for a legal separation instead.

The high tribunal affirmed the findings of the investigating judge that there was no proof that Campos had a relationship with another woman or was immoral on account of his supposedly being gay.

Hiding true sexuality

"With respect to respondent's alleged homosexuality, such issue is for the determination of the trial court wherein the [annulment case] is pending. Then, we also agree in absolving [him] from the charge of dishonesty. The fact that [he] got married and had children is not proof against his claim of homosexuality. As pointed out, it is possible that [he] was only suppressing or hiding his true sexuality," the high court said.

The justices, however, ruled that Campos committed an unlawful act when he executed an affidavit of loss of a land title that was in his possession. The investigation showed Campos had his minor son registered as the owner of the land.

After reporting the loss, Campos told the provincial register of deeds that he (Campos) was the real owner and that the title had been wrongly registered to his son's name. The wife, however, claimed the title was never lost and that their son had it all along. She claimed the judge merely wanted the property back in the event that the annulment was granted.

Campos had said that he only wanted to protect his interest, adding that his wife and son wanted to use the property as collateral for a loan.

Based on the decision, the judge may have anticipated the breakup of his marriage and registered the title in the son's name in the land would not become conjugal property which would have to be split if Campos' wife won the legal separation case.

Out-of-school youth can go to summer school

By Nikka Cuhuja

THE DEPARTMENT of Education (DepEd) is inviting out-of-school youth to attend a summer class where alternative lessons will be taught using "learning-friendly strategies."

In a statement, Education Secretary Armin Luistro said the initiative was part of the department's move to make education more accessible and inclusive to all learners.

"We are calling on children and youth who have not been to school to attend this summer class which was specifically designed for them," said Luistro.

Called the alternative delivery mode (ADM) summer program, the class caters to all youth regardless of gender, physical, intellectual, social condition and linguistic background. This includes high school dropouts, Luistro added.

The program aims to address concerns on access and quality of education in elementary and secondary levels.

Luistro convened all regional ADM teams to meet with division coordinators and launch a massive information campaign to reach the targeted summer class attendees.

"We are likewise enlisting the support of other education stakeholders such as parents, non-government groups, local government units, alumni associations as well as 'home gay personnel to help the DepEd bring these learners to the summer class," Luistro said.

Registration was conducted during the four Saturdays of February.

Paper work, however, is required in case of loss or inadequate registration documents. Such as an elementary certificate of graduation, elementary card or high school report card of the last year attended). Interested attendees are required to secure a certification from their local government and the local office of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

The certification should express the willingness of the institution to temporarily act as guardian and assist the prospective enrollee in the submission of the required documents.

The department did not say how many out-of-school youth actually enrolled as many were unable to comply with all the documentation requirements.

NPC opposes Palace on hiking 'sin tax'

By GVC Calosoyan

GOING against the wishes of Malacañang, the administration-ally Nacionalist People's Coalition (NPC) has decided to oppose a House bill seeking to raise taxes on so-called "sin products," or alcoholic drinks and cigarettes.

Antonio Tuy. Mark Llandro Mendoza and the NPC had decided that the party would stand against the administration-backed House Bill No. 5727 authored by Cavite Rep. Joseph E.A. Abaya because its proponents failed to address concerns on the massive job displacements that would arise from the proposal, which envisages a unitary tax scheme from the current fractioned tax system.

Local distillers and cigarette makers, including San Miguel Corp., which is chaired by NPC founder Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, warned that the 3,000-percent hike in taxes sought in the measure would drive most players out of business and render hundreds of thousands of employees jobless as local brands would lose their price advantage over foreign brands.

Malacañang has endorsed the bill as it would have the effect of raising an additional P400 billion in revenue during the last four years of President Aquino's term and make up for the inability of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs to meet their targets.

The NPC is a member of the ruling coalition that is led by the Liberal Party which is headed by President Aquino.

Members said the bill's proponents also failed to assuage fears that approval of the bill would lead to increased smuggling of low-cost cigarettes that would be poised out of the market with the imposition of a single tax.

He also said that there was no assurance the revenue raised would go toward easing rising health problems in the country as promised by the Department of Health's.

The NPC line is expected to join lawmakers from the "solid South" or the tobacco-growing Regions 5, 8 and 11 as well as members of the minority bloc who had earlier expressed their opposition to the government plan to raise sin taxes.

Solon seeks lifestyle check at customs

A LAWMAKER has asked the Aquino administration to conduct a lifestyle check on all employees of the Bureau of Customs (BOC).

Cagayan Rep. Jack Enrile made the suggestion after BOC clerk Paulino Elevado resigned on Feb. 21, a month after he fired his gun at and beat up a 20-year-old student who had bumped his Porsche Carrera.

Enrile believes there could be other similar cases at the BOC who are living beyond their government income like Elevado.

"Like many other cases involving bad-boy Filipinos, I find the arrogance of the executive clerk who drives a Porsche and shoots another motorist over a traffic altercation very appalling. I am also quite intrigued by how this guy can afford his lifestyle given the level of salary he is supposed to be receiving at the BOC," he said.

He said the BOC should not stop on going after Elevado but should make a serious effort to shed its image as a bedrock of corruption by conducting a mandatory lifestyle check on all employees.

"It would be wise for the President to order a lifestyle check on all customs employees, starting with their senior officials, to send a message that nobody is exempt from the administration's 'daang matuwid' campaign," he said. GVC Calosoyan

War declared vs blast fishers

THE BUREAU of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) has declared an "all-out war" against dynamite fishing and other illegal fishing practices.

BFAR Director Asis Perez said the government was beefing up enforcement of the laws against fishing with explosives, as the bureau recently revealed that the country's major fishing grounds have shown signs of over fishing.

Municipal and commercial fishermen have reported declining catch in the past 40 years due to over fishing, illegal fishing and pollution, the BFAR said.

"All the major causes of a fish decline are manmade and therefore preventable if all stakeholders would take their responsibilities seriously," Perez said.

This year, the BFAR was given P1.66 billion for law enforcement to run after dynamite fishers.

Perez said fishermen who used explosives not only killed fish but also other marine species necessary for a healthy marine life.

"What is shocking is not is that for one fish species alone, the damage could run up to P240 million in losses per day," he added. Erickson L. Alano

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Who's in the money? Only Oscar knows for sure

HOLLYWOOD—Hollywood is set for its biggest night of the year on Sunday (Monday in Manila), as movies in film-making—silent movie "The Artist" and Martin Scorsese's "Hugo"—vie for Oscars glory at the 84th Academy Awards.

After months of campaigning and a flurry of victory speeches, Tinseltown's annual awards season reaches its high point with the most prestigious honors of them all, the coveted gold-en statuettes.

Hundreds of millions around the globe will tune in for the ceremony hosted once again by comedian Billy Crystal, after a format-wise their stuff down the most-watched red carpet in the world.

"Added excitement for Deana: One envelope will contain a live scorpion!" Crystal, who has done the job eight times before, joked in a Twitter message ahead of the greatest show in Hollywood.

In actual, the annual march to Oscars coronation has not been without a few technical surprises.

British actor Sacha Baron Cohen, who starred in a subdued performance in "Hugo," has traded barbs with his apparent place in protests his upcoming film "The Dictator" in full Iran-strongman regalia on the red carpet. Boosting the top brass at the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences.

Clooney vs Pitt

The list of pranksters is chock full of heavy hitters...last year's best actress and actor Natalie Portman and Colin Firth will join Halle Berry, Tom Cruise, Penelope Cruz, Tom Hanks and Angelina Jolie, among others.

Scorsese's "Hugo," a visually rich 3D tribute to a French film pioneer, goes into the show with the most nominations, at 11, with black-and-white, half-lyrical love letter "The Artist" and Android with 10.

Scorsese is not the only big-industry director in the mix...Woody Allen is in the running for best picture honors for his comeback hit "Midnight in Paris," and Steven Spielberg will pan for the top prize with "War Horse."

Besides George Clooney and Brad Pitt will duke it out for best actor, but "Artist" star Jean Dujardin, who has won a slew of awards for his role as a struggling silent-era movie star, could put the race to bed.

Pitt is up for his role as coach Billy Beane in the baseball movie "Moneyball," while Clooney has been lauded for playing against type in "The Descendants," a family drama set in Hawaii that is also in the hunt for best picture honors.

Meryl Streep's Iron Lady is the best actress shoo-fire for this poignant turn as an undocumented migrant in "A Better Life," as is British veteran Gary Oldman for Cold War spy thriller "Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy."

'The Artist' gets boost

"The Artist" got a boost Saturday as the Spirit Awards for independent film, taking home prizes for best picture, best director for Michel Hazanavicius, best male lead actor for Dujardin and best cinematography.

The French director, fresh off the plane from Paris after his film's big night at France's annual Cesars ceremony, said that he was starting to feel the heat.

"I'm a little bit nervous...the outside pressure is rising somewhere subtly," Hazanavicius said after the Spirit awards ceremony held in Santa Monica.

Meryl Streep could take home her first Oscar in three decades for a powerful turn as former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher in "The Iron Lady," in a bid to catch cross-dressing Glenn Close in "Albert Nobbs."

Rooney Mara, who plays damaged hacker Lisbeth Salander in "The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo" is also in the running for best actress prize, as is Viola Davis for her role as Minister in "My Week with Marilyn."

But Oscar watchers say they could all be beaten by Viola Davis, where role as a black maid in "The Help"—set in Mississippi against the backdrop of the 1960s civil rights struggle—has earned her accolades-ing of praise.

Supporting actress

Davis' co-star Octavia Spencer is seen as a top contender in the best supporting actress category. Co-stars Jessica Chastain is also mentioned along with Jeanne Bujo from "The Artist" and Melissa McCarthy for "Bridesmaids."

Janet McTeer rounds out the category with her gender-bending turn opposite Close in "Albert Nobbs."

"The Help" is the top-grossing title to have nominations nominated for best picture, along with "War Horse," "The Artist," "Moneyball," "The Descendants," "Midnight in Paris," "Hugo" and the powerful 9/11 film "Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close."

Also up for the top prize is Terrence Malick's "The Tree of Life," which won the coveted palme d'or at last year's Cannes Film Festival.

Supporting actor top tips are Christopher Plummer in "Beginners" and Brat was below to "Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close," Jonah Hill in "Moneyball" and Nick Nolte in "Warrior" are also in the race. AFP

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Remains of OFW arrive from HK

THE REMAINS of a 34-year-old overseas Filipina worker (OFW) who was buried deep in Hong Kong early this month were repatriated over the weekend.

The body of Jennelyn Gomez, of Imelda, Cavite, was buried floating off the coast of Shau Kei Wan, a town on the eastern side of Hong Kong, on Feb. 5.

Her remains arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on Philippine Airlines flight PR 205. Her parents, Benito and Lucia Gomez, and Overseas Workers Welfare Administration officials were the receivers.

The OFWA said the transfer of the remains conducted by the Hong Kong police on Gomez had not been released.

The Philippine government earlier said it was considering with investigators in Hong Kong to determine the cause of death.

Gomez's father said his daughter sent him a text message in January telling him she had a problem, but she did not elaborate.

Tina S. Santos

36 OFWs fleeing Syria come home on gov't tab

By Jerry E. Esplanada

ANOTHER 20 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) arrived in the Philippines from strife-wracked Syria yesterday courtesy of the government's free repatriation program, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).

The OFWs—accompanied by Charge d'Affaires Olivia Palala of the Philippine Embassy in Damascus—arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport at 5:12 p.m. on Emirates EK 332.

At Terminal 3, the repatriates were welcomed by staff of the DFA and the labor department-attached Overseas Workers Welfare Administration.

Last night, another 16 OFWs were scheduled to arrive from Syria on another Emirates flight.

The two batches of OFWs brings to 1,069 the number of Philippine nationals repatriated from the strife-torn Middle East country, according to the DFA.

"The OFWs' airfare was shouldered entirely by the government," according to Raul Hernandez, the DFA spokesperson.

Hernandez said that "at least nine of the OFWs came from the Syrian province Idlib of Homs, Hama and Alli, while nine others, all overlooking others, were released from Kafla in north Lebanon to Damascus."

Last week, 11 OFWs from Syria were flown home by the foreign office.

Early this month, Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario deployed the DFA's "rapid response team," which includes personnel from the Philippine National Police and the Department of Labor and Employment, to "help out in the evacuation and repatriation of OFWs from Syria's conflict areas."

Hernandez said the foreign office was set to evacuate 160 more OFWs based in the conflict areas, where the "violence has become very alarming."

The embassy has so far received nearly 200 repatriation applications from the four conflict areas, he noted.

Del Rosario earlier said that based on new developments in the pivotal Idlib, the DFA "may need to go one step further and would in a strategy of relocation."

He said that "rather than reduce the operating teams to help our distressed nationals, we are expanding to do what is necessary."

The DFA had "anticipated a probable escalation of violence which resulted in our bringing in an additional team of negotiators to locate our mandatory repatriation," the secretary said.

He said that unlike the United States Embassy in Damascus, the Philippine mission would remain open "as long as we have OFWs there that need help."

"We have no plans of closing... our embassy will continue to operate as mandated by President Aquino," he added.

So far, no Filipino has been killed or wounded in the deadly crackdown, on protests by Syrian security forces, said the embassy.

More than 5,500 people have died in the 11 month uprising against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, according to the United Nations.

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OPINION

'Historic event'

EDITORIAL

FORMER PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo pleaded "not guilty" Thursday before the Pasay City Regional Trial Court to the charge of electoral sabotage in connection with the 2007 senatorial elections. Evincing her characteristic briskness and her businesslike attitude, she made her lawyers waive the reading of the charges so that she could be indicted at once, before Judge Jesus Mupas. Arroyo, the former president, now representative of Pampanga, stood calmly and entered her plea. Outside, some 2,000 supporters had welcomed her arrival. As quickly as she had come, she left the court, waving to them, before boarding her van for the trip back to her detention at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City.

A week before, her lawyers had requested the court that she be arraigned separately from former Maguindanao Gov. Andal Ampatuan Sr. and election supervisor Lintang Bedol, her co-accused in the case. The latter two had asked the court for a deferment of the arraignment, which was granted by Mupas who moved the date to March 19. But Arroyo's lawyers later told the court that the former president wanted to be arraigned at once, because of the strain of postponements on her physical condition (she's starting a degenerative bone disease), as well as the security problems that would arise should all three be brought to the court at the same time. Perhaps the gesture was a show of bravura in a nation of grand but often vacuous political theatrics. But the insistence to be arraigned immediately and the promptness with which Arroyo went to Pasay City from her detention in Quezon City, and the poise and serenity with which she entered her plea, should at least impress even her detractors of her self-confidence as well as her trust in the law and its workings.

The charges against her are ugly: she's accused of no less than stealing the ballot and undervoting the elections, the cornerstone of republican democracy. But it's the same constitutional democracy—with its rules and procedures ensuring due process and fair and honest dispensation of justice—that would be her defense and support. Just as those who claimed to have been robbed of their electoral victory in 2007 (where she allegedly ordered a 12-0 result in the senatorial elections in Maguindanao in favor of her political coalition) had run to the source of the law for justice and redress, she is now seeking relief and, perhaps, redemption from the same system.

Truly what happened last Thursday was democracy in action. Like the handover of the reins of power to her successor, Benigno Aquino III in 2010, the arraignment of Arroyo and her co-hats enacting of a not-guilty plea, should indicate that the nation has grown in democratic grace. That advance may not be immediately evident in the impeachment trial of Chief Justice Renato Corona, since impeachment is a heavily political process. But there's no gainsaying that all of the protagonists, including the impeached himself, have recognized the trial as part of the workings of truth finding and justice in democracy. Moreover, the public that has religiously followed the trial through the Senate gallery or the media has been educated on democracy and to byways, intrigue and its self-correcting remedies.

Arroyo herself during her reign had presided over the prosecution and conviction for plunder of deposed President Joseph Estrada. Sentenced to 40 years in jail, Estrada was later pardoned by Arroyo. She now has to undergo trial like her predecessor, which, she must understand, is part of the dynamics of constitutional democracy. In short, she must give an accounting of her administration. As Malacañang spokesperson Edwin Lacierda said, "No-one is above the law." Of course, it's an odd twist of fate that she's being charged with violation of Republic Act 9006, the law against electoral sabotage that was passed only in 2007 and which she herself signed five months before the 2007 election.

Arroyo has denied she broke the law and said politics is behind the accusation against her. But whether politically motivated or not, the charge and its veracity will have to be determined in a court of justice. Lacierda pluralistically called the trial of Arroyo as a "clear of indictment," but court spokesperson Febda Domingo more appropriately called it "a very historic event," since "this shows that no one is above the law." "Whether you're a president or not," she added, "you have to go through the process to which you are entitled." In short, Arroyo will have her day in court. She deserves nothing less.

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Two uncles dead in battle for Intramuros

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

BEFORE THE month of February ends, which is **the anniversary month of the liberation of Manila** by American forces, I would like to write about the deaths of two of my uncles and the narrow escape of my aunt and her 7-year-old son from the Japanese in the battle for Intramuros.

She lived on an idyllic island in the middle of Balsahan in Malabon, but an uncle had a shoe store on Calle Real in Intramuros. It was called Real Shoe Store and was one of the most popular shoe stores there during the Japanese occupation. The store sold made-to-order shoes and boots to Japanese officers.

Workers made the shoes at the back of the store. The second floor was the living quarters for my uncle (the youngest sister of my mother), his Spanish mestiza wife, their young son, and her brother who was crippled by polio.

My oldest sister used to take me there on some Sundays, and I liked it very much because on the way there we passed through the Mehan Garden and had a wonderful merienda there.

After the Americans landed in Leyte and later in Lingayen, and as the battle for the liberation of the Philippines raged closer to Manila, we were advised to evacuate to the provinces as many other families had already done. My aunt and uncle, however, refused to leave. Business was good, the war was still far away and they wanted to earn as much as they could before the battle reached them. That was a big mistake.

The three youngest children in the family, I and two brothers, were told to evacuate with the family of my oldest brother, his father-in-law and mother-in-law, and the families of three brothers-in-law.

We set out on foot with two make-carts piled high with our belongings. It was like an outing for us children. We were bound for a farm in Pangasinan, and it was estimated that it would take us at least a week of walking to get there.

We cooked our food at the side of the high way and slept either on the ground or in some of the abandoned houses on the road. We thought what we could from markers along the way.

My oldest sister and older brother and my grandfather were left in our house in Malabon. My father and his new family were living in an apartment on Laguna Street, Sampaloc, Manila. Metropolis in Intramuros, my aunt and uncle were blissfully unaware of the coming holocaust. They were too busy taking to Mickey Mouse money from the Japanese.

At Santa Ignacia in Tarlac, two American bombers, Liberators, emerged very, very low. We thought they were going to land, for they only dropped leaflets. They said that American forces had landed in Lingayen and were fighting their way to Manila, and advised Filipinos to stay away from the highways and move indeed as they would not get caught in the crossfire.

We were in a quandary. If we continued on to Pangasinan, we would meet the American troops and we probably would get killed in the crossfire between the Americans and the Japanese forces. The Tarlac folk in Santa Ignacia (fun, too, and kindly invited us to go with them across the wide river in a barrio on the other side.

We accepted the offer, and that came about mean there was a mass evacuation from Agoncillo to the other barrios on the other side: San Jose, Sta. Maria and Sto. Niño.

The barrio folk piled their belongings into their carabao drawn carts and led the way across the river. The river was very wide, but it was summer and the water was only a stream flowing in the middle, and gods of water seemed love and there. The river was calm—and that because we had to be in the middle of the day you could see really hazy on it. Luckily, the rain was on the way down and we could walk behind the carts.

We had an idyllic life there until Manila was liberated and we went back home.

My relatives in Intramuros, however, went through hell. As the sound of the big guns came closer, they decided to leave. But it was too late. All the bridges across the Ilog had been blown up. They could not go south because there was fighting there.

So they went back to Calle Real. One day, Japanese soldiers went from house to house and told the residents to gather in a church. The men were separated from the women and children.

The men, including my two uncles, were taken to Fort Santiago, but the women and children were taken to a church. They stayed there a while, but the Japanese moved out sooner. Stopped from exploding artillery here through the roof and windows, but the church remained standing. The people inside took shelter under the pews and even behind the altar. My aunt put her son under the bench. There was an elderly woman who was pregnant. She was about to give birth. It turned out a very small piece was through the backs and wounded him in the forehead.

When—from the sounds of battle—they knew there was no more fighting going on, the church doors opened and they stood several Japanese soldiers. They poured gasoline inside the church, and one Japanese threw in two incendiary grenades.

She, my aunt and everybody thought they were going to die. Luckily, the flame left open by the Japanese burning to get away. Seventy of the refugees were able to make through the fire and escape. My aunt, now almost 100 years old, is still alive to tell us the story of their harrowing escape.

My two uncles were not so lucky. Fortunate. Their deaths were told by the few who were able to get town.

They were packed into a cell in Fort Santiago. Some of them began chipping off the adobe wall to get out. In time, they were able to make a hole, just big enough for a body to push through. And then, Japanese soldiers poured gasoline into the cell and lighted it. There was pandemonium as everybody rushed to the escape hole.

One uncle, the husband of my aunt, was already out. And my other uncle, their eldest, called out to him for help. So he went back although the fire was already licking at him. The two of them, and many other prisoners, never got out.

Mob rule

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

ORO, SO far the prosecution's best witnesses have been non-accusatory, both women. They are Kim Henares and Lolo de Lima. They are the surest signs P-Noy is serious about prosecuting his anti-corruption campaign.

De Lima did a particularly outstanding job last week in light of what she was up against. It's not the easiest thing proving a chief justice is biased toward someone he is beholden to. Xavier pressing he is corrupt. To prove bias, proceed to show two things: pattern and ascendancy.

You take Renato Corona's decisions singly, and however wrongheaded they are, they can always be excused as seemingly or lapse in judgment. It's like someone who always gets into trouble with his bosses. He can always argue in each case that it's his boss' fault. But you take the cases collectively and you see the problem is not with his bosses, it's with him. It's the pattern that reveals, not the individual cases.

Add as well, you take Corona's decisions singly or collectively, and however wrongheaded they are, they can still be excused as the product of a collective debate. He did not make the mistake alone, more often billions did.

Despite this, De Lima managed to do very well. She managed to at least point, if not prove, that in the case alone of the Supreme Court's ruling to allow Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to leave the country, Corona committed an act of treachery over his fellows and did everything in his power to cut of it, including lend the ruling to misshapen form, to enforce his will. Prosecution still needs to show pattern and ascendancy nonetheless, but it's a good start.

Then, arguably De Lima carried her case on the words, or actions, of two dissenting justices, who are Ma. Lourdes Sereno and Antonio Carpio. Which had Serafin Cuevas crying bronsay and Miriam Santiago crying loud, the latter specifically saying that if you must cite from the record, cite the majority opinions and not the minority one.

Juan Ponce Enrile, I thought, gave a sanely reasoned ruling when he ruled that some parts of De Lima's testimony could not be accepted, particularly the ones that have to do with Corona's behavior, because she did not personally witness how he went about doing what he did, but some parts of it could because she was citing from a document on record. You can always question the accuracy of what a public document says, but you cannot question that it says those things. Citing from it is no more hearsay than citing from the Constitution. You can always disagree with the Constitution, but you cannot disagree that it says what it does.

Particularly noteworthy in Carpio's claim that he and Presbitero Velasco agreed that Arroyo had not complied with one of the conditions of the 1963 bar Corona's version, which the Court adopted, was that Arroyo had "substantially complied" with them. That only points to the importance of either Carpio or Sereno, or both, providing the testimony themselves. Striking like putting it straight from the horse's mouth. That of course is why Corona and his defense are summoning reserves of courage to take on their fellows in the Court. And Carpio's appearance in particular will be used by Corona's camp to cow members, at least, but Carpio is of his job. But it'll likely weird and not anybody else's that will check that deed.

As to Santiago's point, why must we tacitly assume the minority decision is lower of the majority one? Where the Court itself is under indictment, where the justices themselves are suspected of acting like a Mafia, the minority decision is the best thing to look at. That was how the Supreme Court was during Marcos' time, which was how Claudio Teehankee rose to prominence. That was how the Supreme Court was during Arroyo's time, and that is how the Supreme Court is under Corona. In conditions of near benighetedness, voices in the wilderness are the harbinger of wisdom. In conditions of conscripted silence, dissenting voices are the rose of truth.

There is nonetheless of a compelled, colleagial try is not a fancy word but such rule.

Why should collegiality protect Corona? Why should the fact that the other justices who—like him are Arroyo's protégés, but who—unlike him were not midnight appointees—voted like him lessen his guilt or make it disappear altogether? If the powers of their votes shows bias, which seemed fail in escape even the blind, only the unbelieving bulgier, then they deserve to be impeached too. Then they deserve to be kicked out too.

The protection of a collegial decision is not unlike the justification for cheating in the elections on the ground that "everybody cheats anyway." That was expressly how an attitude up justified "Hello Garci." What's the hope. Everybody cheats anyway, so, that makes Arroyo innocent? Wrong. Everybody cheats anyway, so that makes the others guilty too. Collective guilt doesn't make the collective innocent; it just makes the collective equally guilty. Or since Arroyo's mode of cheating benefited that of others, it just makes her guilty of more mischief. In short, Corona's mode of disambiguating cronies has position, it just makes him guilty of prime-time pares.

Collegiality may not save Corona, it may only damn his fellows. It may not free Corona, it may only indict the Supreme Court itself. It may only indict the Supreme Court itself. It may only make us realize there is no such thing as the supreme court of justices, at least insofar as they are currently constituted. It may only make us realize there is nothing supreme about the Supreme Court other than a capacity for supreme folly. The collective transcription of law to serve the ends of tyranny is not the rule of law. It is the overthrow of law for the greater glory of Clinton, or at least to keep her beyond the reach of the law, to use the rule of law.

It is mob rule.

Popular sovereignty real and bogus

LAST SATURDAY we recalled the historic event of the Edsa Revolution. No, it was a revolution, although a peaceful one. A revolution takes place when a portion of the populace attempts to wrest power from the legitimate government. If it fails, the leaders go to jail. If it succeeds and maintains its hold on the government, it is supreme. Before our time are Edsa wins a republican democratic set whichjust as endorsed the 1973 Constitution.

The heirs of the Edsa event have managed to maintain their hold on government. They have instituted a new Constitution and have held elections and plebiscites under the new Constitution.

The Edsa Revolution, the ratification of the 1987 Constitution, and the elections are the legitimate manifestations of popular sovereignty. They are the product of the people exercising their sovereign power. Our Constitution says: "The Philippines is a democratic and republican State. Sovereignty resides in the people and all government authority emanates from them." "People" to this document refers to those who manifest their will in an election, in a plebiscite for the ratification of the Constitution, or in a referendum/initiative.

There is an ongoing campaign to distort this meaning of popular sovereignty. Popular sovereignty is being interpreted as the current fit majoritarian sentiment of the people as evidenced by surveys. Surveys, whether by SWS or by Pulse Asia or by whatever outfit might attempt it, are not manifestations of popular sovereignty. They do not authorize public officials, no matter how highly placed, to disregard the law or the Constitution. Nor does a representative claim of massive popularity enhance a public official's power to violate the limitations that are given to him or her by the law and the Constitution. Reliance on popular tallies for power enhancement are merely answers to dreams, imagery, an effective instrument for dividing the nation and an effective way of frustrating

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even the gains made by the Edsa event.

Earlier I quoted a columnist/jurist who once said on a "reform" minded English monarch, "This country is plastered thick with laws from coast to coast. If you eat them down, the you would think that you will be able to withstand the winds that will blow then?" The same jurist also said "I am the king's good servant, but God's first." Today the jurist is viewed as a political hack appointed holding positions of power and responsibility.

Threats of the impeachment prosecution, an interesting moment occurred during the impeachment trial last Tuesday after Senator Pres Jinn Anna Pimentel-Enrile said that in our impeachment proceedings of former Chief Justice Corona the framers of the rules of to ensure that what will be brought to the Senate would be a well-prepared case. The fact was, the Senate president said, the impeachment case against Chief Justice Renato Corona was not prepared well and the prosecution was trying to stitch a case together in the course of the trial with the help of subpoenas.

In reply, Rep. Rodolfo Fariñas of the House prosecution team pointed to two kinds of impeachment processes, and correctly. One process is for a situation where an impeachable complaint is filed without the needed support of at least one-third of the House. In such a situation the House Committee on Justice conducts hearings to determine if the case possesses probable cause. Thereafter the committee makes a report to the plenary, which reviews the matter to determine if indeed there is sufficient cause for bringing it to trial. The vote of one-third of the plenary is needed to affirm the finding of the committee. The minority that the filing of the Senate will not be needed in a presumed search for evidence.

The second mode of impeachment says: "In case the verified complaint or resolution of impeachment is filed by at least one-third of all the members of the House, the same shall constitute the articles of impeachment and trial by the Senate shall forthwith proceed." Given this provision, there is no reply in that the grand jury role of the House is dispensed with. This seems to be the basis for Representative Fariñas' explanation for the imperfection of the articles of impeachment. In fact, earlier during the trial, Fariñas had already convicted the articles of impeachment. Again he is being presumptuous.

A problem again arose during the latest part of last Tuesday's trial when the prosecutors involved a vice president of Philippine Air Lines to prove an allegation that the Chief Justice traveled to Inter-PAC, in litigation because of latter's case that was resolved from 1961. But the allegation was not found in the article of impeachment being discussed. The Senate president barred the testimony of the PAL vice president.

It might be worth recalling that the impeachment of former President Joseph Estrada lasted barely for nearly two, the second week. But the complaint itself was filed weeks before the complaint was sent to the Senate. Hence the prosecutors did have time to prepare for the trial. In the case of the current impeachment trial, however, the complaint of 188 representatives arrived in the Senate 24 hours of its filing. So even do the prosecutors has been having problems. What these events seem to be telling us is that, whichever method of impeachment may be used, the House somehow should perform some grand jury role.

New plans, old mistakes?

GOVERNMENT HAS received from the World Bank a $1.5-million grant to plan water and sanitation facilities in Metro Manila, and a $220-million loan to implement the plan. According to a study in this and other papers on Feb. 13, Readers might think such news would delight the poor families living along the region's waterways, since it could mean their lives of bleeding are at an end, and government would now have the means to provide them with more prosperous life. Instead, the poor who know of the plan are shaking in their boots. The poor regularly lose out when government talks of flood control. In the past it has meant the demolition of their homes and painful relocation to far-off, economically barren places where there are no jobs.

But in this time, the government will say. The poor would like to be reassured, and might be so assured if these matters were taken care of. One, that the planners meet with the poor and their people's organizations (POs) and that any plan(s) before the plan is put together—that is, early on in the process—so there thinking and their experience will have a place in the preparation of the plan. They hope the government won't wait till the plan is finished and then meet with the poor to inform them only of what has been decided. They want to have a voice in this major decision that affects their lives.

Second, the poor would have more hope of good planning results if they know the government had set aside funds for the poor to have a decent relocation of those families whose evictions cannot be avoided. By decent relocation they mean the norms agreed to by Presidents Aquino in his Covenant with the Urban Poor of Manila, in 2010. He promised in the covenant to work to: "Ensure that there is no forcible eviction and demolition unless adequate and genuine consultations with affected families have been undertaken and basic services will be provided to them in the relocation sites."

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Basic jury principles violated

LETTERS

"WE ARE 23 minds here. We are a body of jurors. In a body of jurors, each one has his own perception and interest in this case in order to make a final judgment. I am not in the position to deny that right to any member of this body." Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, presiding over the impeachment trial of Chief Justice Renato Corona, explained why he could not stop any of the senator-judges from interrogating prosecutor, defense counsels or witnesses.

If so, the senators, purposely or through sheer ignorance, are violating the basic and fundamental principles, tenets and/or precedents that serve as the very foundations for people to trust the jury system. The violations are so crucial that more such violations would result in the people completely losing trust and confidence in the impartiality of the senators or in their capability to render fair judgments on the sole basis of evidence submitted in the proceedings. Is it surprising then that the last impeachment trial ended in a hung jury? Has Joseph Estrada resulted in the second People Power uprising?

Generally, all rules and procedures on "jury trial" have the sole purpose of eliminating bias and prejudice among jurors. We senior citizen of the ongoing impeachment trial of some senators have shown bias with their behavior during the impeachment proceedings or through their statements to the media. It is crystal clear that a juror is not supposed to ask questions and are likewise prohibited from talking about the case before a jury verdict has been made. The latter rule safeguards against bias for or against any party to the case. Another basic rule is that any statement of law is for the judge to decide, in impeachment proceedings, the chairman acts as the judge and rules on questions of law. The jurors do not rule on findings of law; the jurors rule only on findings of facts after the trial.

Also, Belmont Klaffe said "each one (of the jurors) has his own... interests in this case." In a trial jury trial, it is a "no-no" for any juror to have any "interest" in the case. There are many other basic rules of the jury system that are being violated by the impeachment trial of Corona.

I believe that the senators (jurors) will taint on their version of the "jury system." The world is watching and many know the fundamental rules of a jury trial. If the senators insist on overruning with their version, they run the risk of being accused of making a mockery of the jury system and of becoming the laughingstock of the world. I suggest that the senators refrain from using the term "juror" which ultimately was derived from the jury system, as the jury system and its basic rules exist for human, something I am not to say is worth holding in the ongoing impeachment proceedings.

—MICHAEL QUIÑOL
Iloilo
mquinol@yahoo.com

Plan holder appeals: Allow release of checks for school year 2011-2012

THIS HAS reference to the article titled "Pre-need firm told to stop payment of claims." Inquirer, 2/4/12.

I would like to appeal to the Insurance Commission to allow Pradenmarkle to release the check payments specifically allotted for school year 2011-2012. The processing of claims took longer than it normally would due to the company's "up to several months" time frame." But despite the delay, we stayed in business and continued to provide for our employees' needs in all plan holders to complete graduation June 1, Rita on May 20, 2010 and Sept. 20, 2011. The company however, has always extended to avail their plan holders' claims that are prepared and scheduled for release on specified dates.

The "stop order" was implemented so suddenly and abruptly that plan holders had no "grace period" to avert its impact on their family's finances, dear company, making the names of the scholars currently enrolled, a matter of panic holders' checks that were issued January 2012 has left me dismayed due to "conflict in schedule" and thereby were also successfully affected by the recess on Jan.

Despite the cancellation of hold-on to self-educational plans in 2009, Pradenmarkle has practiced due diligence in servicing the said claims every installments period. The problem of the company through his lawyer to all plan holders, has responsibly and dutifully communicated to us updates on the company's position and on the direction it will take and the changes it will make in the processing of claims.

Once again, I appeal to the Insurance Commission's office of fair play, to be more circumspect in its decision, and to kindly allow the release of the checks that have already been prepared for this school year and further on, and to discuss, deliberate and review the rehabilitation plan submitted by Pradenmarkle.

—GINO LOUIS CRUZ,
plan holder,
Pradenmarkle Educational Plan
ginos2012@yahoo.com

SSS still to be steered into right path

I AM writing in the hope of bringing the Social Security System to the right path.

I was able to comply with all my requirements for retirement some time in 2010. Two years after, I am still following up my first retirement check.

The reason is not lack of: (1) manual verification of SSS accountants; (2) "encashment" or paper-to-piece instructions or the lack of requirements, and so the information is also on "manual" basis," etc.

As a former manager of InCity Dental Supply, Ayala & Co.'s Management Services Division and experienced public accountants, I am asking the SSS that it release my first retirement pay.

Don't you think it is the job of the SSS to ask the submission of all required documents a year before a member's retirement?

—EDGAR CRUZ, JR.
SSS No. 0901 [illegible]
kingsmilan_realtor@yahoo.com

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Letters of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

CONGRATULATIONS!

JOHN NICO H. SAMSEL (83.80%)
8TH Place
Physical Therapist Licensure Examination
February 2012

MARLON D. GABUAT (88.20%)
2ND Place
Officer-in-Charge of Engineering Watch (Operational Level)
Licensure Examination • January 2012

FRANCIS C. NOVERO (85%)
1ST Place
Officer-in-Charge of Engineering Watch (Operational Level)
Licensure Examination • January 2012

PRINCESS ROSCHELLE D. LIMSON (83.20%)
4TH Place
Nursing Licensure Examination
December 2011

JENKY M. CERSO (84.10%)
3RD Place
Nursing Licensure Examination
December 2011

CLARENCE V. LAO (81.40%)
10TH Place
Dental Board Examination
December 2011

MA. LETH C. DE GUZMAN (86.80%)
3RD Place
Med. Tech. Board Examination
November 2011

CARLO JOSE B. CAPARAS (83.60%)
10TH Place
Med. Tech. Board Examination
November 2011

ROXANNE M. FIGUEROA (83.60%)
3RD Place
Med. Tech. Board Examination
September 2011

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Across the NATION

Robredo goes after absentee mayors

By Dona Z. Pazolagan

ROBREDO

MAYORS and other local government officials who frequently absent themselves from their official duties should be sanctioned, according to Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo.

Robredo said they have been continuously receiving reports of the habitual absenteeism and negligence of local chief executives.

"Some local government officials are either frequently absent or holding office elsewhere other than their official places of assignment," he said.

The law considers a governor or mayor "habitually absent" if he stays at least 10 consecutive working days or a month out of his official area of jurisdiction.

Robredo reminded local officials against "preserving their profiteers or engaging in any corruption other than the exercise of their functions as local chief executives" found in Section 60 of the Local Government Code.

He directed provincial governors to establish a monitoring mechanism on the presence of local chief executives in their official stations and report those who are habitually absent.

"In the exercise of your general supervisory power over component cities and municipalities, you may admonish habitually absent local chief executives or as may be warranted, cause the filing of appropriate charges against them," Robredo told governors.

A department memo he issued last year stated that a local government official could be suspended or removed from office for "dishonesty, oppression, misconduct in office, gross negligence or dereliction of duty, or misbehavior, absence for 15 consecutive working days."

THE 26TH ANNIVERSARY of Edsa People Power Revolution served as a platform for the possible gubernatorial campaign of City of San Fernando Mayor Oscar Rodriguez. TONY DE GUZMAN/INQUIRER.COM.PH

2013 poll in Pampanga shapes up between P-Noy ally, Pineda

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Political observers and officials in Pampanga had assumed Gov. Lilia Pineda would run unopposed in her reelection bid next year. But that scenario changed on Tuesday.

On the 26th anniversary of the People Power Revolution, City of San Fernando Mayor Oscar Rodriguez, an ally of President Aquino and chair of the League of Cities of the Philippines, signified his willingness to run as governor. He promised to spread in the province the benefits of good governance, which this capital city has reaped in the last eight years.

"Let us serve Pampanga," the theme of the event on Tuesday night, was seen to be his rallying cry.

But Rodriguez expanded himself as intellectual in his 2013 bid. Drawing a lesson from the peaceful citizen-backed military uprising in 1986, he said people, not candidates, should decide the future of the province.

Challenge

To some 800 community leaders in the province, he threw this challenge: "Show me how far you can take this cause and I shall bet my life on it."

"Who said I sit back and run from a fight that means change to our beloved province?" he said.

Pineda wrote-off Rodriguez's plan, saying the people would eventually decide who is fit to lead them.

But what she has put a lot of focus on addressing the health needs of Pampanga residents because these are what the poor people need. "But this does not mean that I neglect education, livelihood and infrastructure projects," Pineda said by telephone on Sunday.

While Rodriguez served as a court stenographer in the 1970s, he also worked as a lobbyist before organizations and non-government after the declaration of martial law.

He studied law while under detention and passed the bar after he was released from prison. He later organized free legal assistance groups and defended victims of human rights violations.

After his stint as provincial administrator, he was elected representative of Pampanga's third congressional district in a candidate of the late former President Corazon Aquino in 1987. He again ran as representative in 1998 and served three consecutive terms until 2004.

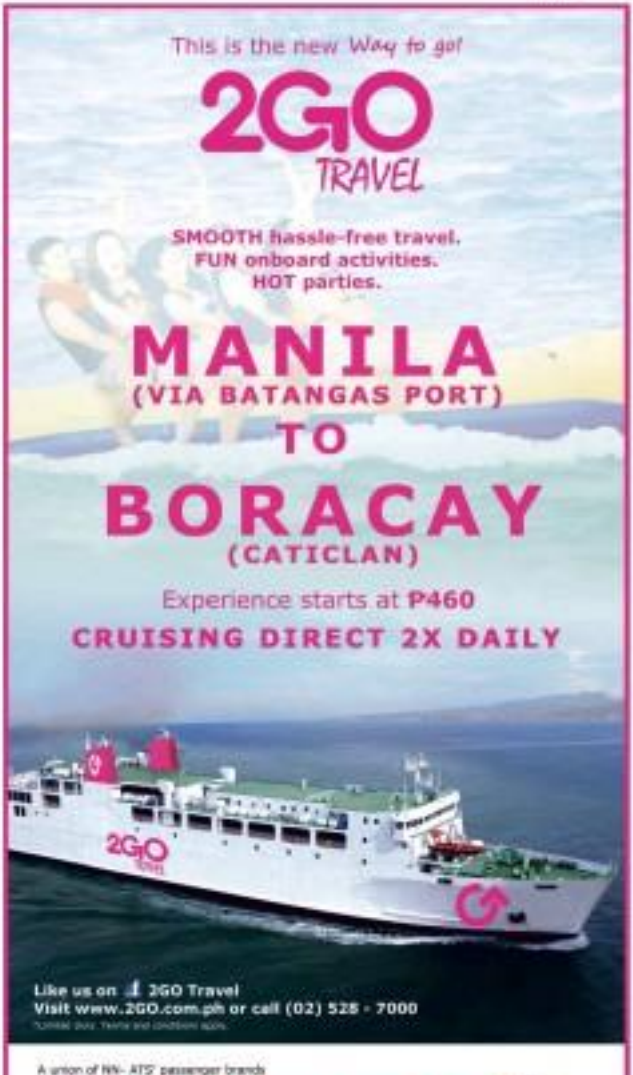
Reform

He was among the prosecutors in the impeachment trial of former President Joseph Estrada in 2000 and 2001.

The 2013 fight, Rodriguez said, would not be easy because Mr. Aquino's thrust for transparent and accountable governance was at stake, saying that electoral politics mainly was on money and political patronage.

In the same event on Saturday, former Pampanga Gov. Eddie Panlilio, who lost his reelection bid to Pineda in 2010, asked Rodriguez to run because "we need a governor in the province, a leader in the province."

"There's a constituency for reform," said Panlilio, a Catholic priest. Timothy Dugan, Inquirer Central Luzon



WARM-UP TO GUINNESS RECORD BID

Lanao del Sur marks People Power: 4,000 seedlings planted

ILIGAN CITY—Lanao del Sur observed the 26th anniversary of People Power Revolution by planting trees in a bid to "employ the same spirit of collective struggle" to protect and develop the province's watershed areas.

The activity was carried out simultaneously at 7 a.m. on Saturday throughout the province's 39 towns and capital Marawi City, said Ehanian women activist Imlaila Gonoc.

Some 4,000 seedlings were planted, 1,200 of which were in Marawi's Sacred Hill.

According to Mindanao State University (MSU) professor Mary Joyce Gomez-Sali of the College of Forestry, the tree-planting activity is just a "warm-up exercise" to an upcoming bid of the province for six entry in the Guinness Book of World Records for the most number of trees planted simultaneously in a single time.

Gomez-Sali said the push for a world record was slated on June 5, World Environment Day.

Last week, the MSU tribal committee of agreements with the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao for the establishment of forest tree nurseries and facilities to produce the 500,000 seedlings required to cover some 894 hectares of forest land in the province under the National Greening Program.

In Tangkal Bonito "Sendong" hit Iligan City, volunteers also planted trees in Barangay San Roque, to a site designated as memorial for victims of the tragedy more than two months ago.

Iligan Councilor Ariel Atighay said the "unfinished revolution after Edsa 1 is the vigorous effort to care for our tree."

Regina Asmagana, executive director of the nongovernment Ecosystems Work for Essential Benefits, said wider community mobilizations is a must to build the resilience of the city to disasters similar to Sendong. *Ayan D. Bonoan, Inquirer Mindanao*

Solon hit for inaction on oil price hikes

But Batanes lawmaker denies accusation, says she is not remiss in her job

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Isang hamon sa mga Magigiting na Bayan

ANNOUNCEMENT

The following officials are candidates for CES Eligibility. They will be subjected to a validation/background investigation. Please submit any feedback, report or opposition to the undersigned on CES eligibility on any of the following candidates:

1.	Provincial Administrator	Provincial Government of Antique
2.	Assistant Schools Division Superintendent	Department of Education
3.	Regional Director I CSC Regional Director I (Re-Titled: CESO III)	Department of Labor and Employment Department of Trade and Industry
4.	CSC Regional Director	Commission on Higher Education and Local Governments
5.	CSC Executive Director	Commission on Higher Education and Local Governments
6.	Education Program Supervisor I CSC Director I Assistant Schools Division Superintendent	Department of Education
7.	Provincial Administrator	Provincial Government of Iloilo
8.	Director III	Department of Public Works and Highways
9.	Director III	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
10.	Director III	Department of Public Works and Highways
11.	Director III	Department of Public Works and Highways
12.	Director III	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
13.	Director III	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
14.	CSC Attorney V / Director CSC Director	Department of Environment and Natural Resources Commission on Higher Education and Local Governments
15.	CSC Director CSC Regional Director	Commission on Higher Education and Local Governments Commission on Higher Education and Local Governments
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Please forward all information, feedback or report on or before before March 9, 2012 to the Office of the Executive Director, CESB, No. 5 Malacañan Street, Iloilo City 5000 Iloilo, Philippines, CES or e-mail to: mail@csc.iloilo.gov.ph or fax to 063-335-1537 or 337-1538.
All information received by the CESB shall be considered with STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY.

(Sgd.) **MARIA ANTONIETTE VELASCO-HILLORENS, CESO IV**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

February 17, 2012

By **Dalin T. Maliar Jr.**
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA CITY—One of the most influential members of the House of Representatives came under fire from left-wing people crying foul over Congress' reaction on proposed measures to stop increases in oil prices.

Rep. Rosedita Abad Fabic (Party-list, Bayan) cut no close measures, according to the bulk-user Pantawid ng Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamayan ng Pilipinas (Pamalakas), a fisherman's group.

Abad is chair of the House committee on energy which has jurisdiction over proposals to end oil price increases.

"She is not helping us," said Romando Hoop, Pamalakas chair.

Representative Abad, who is budget Secretary Florencio Abad, "blatantly snubbed" proposals calling for a review of the Oil Deregulation Law and for an investigation of foreigners' control of oil companies.

Representative Abad, however, denied the accusation. She said her committee conducted a public hearing in Bacolod City "precisely to look into alleged overpricing and [how we] can address the problem."

She said in a text message that there had been a "consensus among various stakeholders that a review of books of oil companies is critical."

The Department of Energy (DOE), she added, is currently doing this. The committee is awaiting the DOE report, she said.

"I have not been remiss in my job," she said.

According to Hoop, however, Representative Abad sat on the following proposals:

- House Bill No. 4101 and No. 4107 filed on March 29, 2011, by Bayan Mums Rep. Teddy Casiño and Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano calling for repeal of the Oil Deregulation Law.
- House Resolution No. 1779 filed on Aug. 10, 2011, calling for an investigation of oil prices' impact on 1.3 million fishermen.
- HB 2646 and HB 4295 barely calling for the repeal of the Oil Deregulation Law and the re-activation of the Oil Price Stabilization Fund (OPSF).
- HB 3837 also calling for the revival of OPSF, a form of subsidy that the Marcos dictatorship established in the past to keep oil prices stable.
- HB 5747 seeking to amend the law that deregulated the oil industry.
- HB 82806 and HB 84936 seeking to stop the collection of value-added tax on oil and oil products.

Hoop said since January this year, oil firms have raised pump prices of diesel by P1.20 per liter, unleaded gasoline by P3.10 per liter and LPG by P0.75-0.85 per 11-kilogram tank.

The impact of the price increases on fishermen is dramatic, said Hoop. Quoting a study made by his group, more than 300,000 small-fishing boat operators use around P500 to P600 of diesel per fishing trip compared to P180 in 2010.

The broad fishermen to reduce the time they spend out at sea, Hoop said.

With Jeff Cabacungan, in Manila

Palace insists Garcia is SBMA administrator

By **Christine O. Avendaño**

MALACAÑANG yesterday insisted that President Aquino had appointed Roberto Garcia as administrator of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) as it expressed puzzlement over the claims of another person that he got the job.

Deputy presidential spokesperson Abigail Valte said she had long announced that Garcia was concurrent director and administrator of SBMA.

"I do not know why some are saying the President signed an appointment paper without a bar code. But as far as we are concerned, Chair Garcia has been given the concurrent appointment as administrator of SBMA for some time now," Valte told government radio dzRB.

She also said that it was "highly improbable" that the Palace made a double appointment for the SBMA top post.

Michael Mayuga-Gail claimed that he was appointed SBMA administrator by President Aquino and that Garcia was only appointed as director.

Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa Jr. had declared that Mayuga-Gail had been appointed to the post.

Mentally disturbed man hacks dead 5 relatives

DUMAGUETE—A man believed to be mentally disturbed killed five of his relatives and wounded another in Manjuyod town, Negros, early Saturday, police said.

Ered Bohlar, 27, entered two houses and attacked the victims with an ax and a knife around 6:30 a.m. in Barangay Bantayan, about 15 kilometers from the capital Dumaguete, said PO2 Nicolas Cargo, public information officer of the Negros Provincial Police Office.

He did not resist when police arrived but fled to the village hall, holding a 26-inch knife believed to be one of the weapons he used in attacking the victims.

Cargo identified the victims as Luciano Bitas, 94, his wife Asuncion, 92, and their daughter Felisidad. Also killed were Lucita's sister-in-law Salvacion Bohlar, 64, and her son Bethanie, 32.

Another victim, Salvacion's daughter Rose, was in critical condition in a hospital in Kabankalan.

Luciano and Asuncion were the parents of Bohlar's mother Lucita. Bohlar's son was his mother's niece.

"The victims were most likely killed while they were sleeping," Cargo told the Inquirer on Saturday.

Initial police investigation showed that Bohlar was scheduled for three months at the mental health hospital in Manjuyod in 2010 after he "heard voices telling him" to do bad things.

Bohlar was released last year after he was cleared by doctors.

Bantayan, a small island off Negros Oriental province, is famous for its white sand beaches.

NEWSBRIEFS

BATANGAS

Cop exec killed

A POLICEMAN on his way to work on board a motorcycle was shot dead along the national highway of Barangay Poblacion, San Pascual town, on Sunday morning.

Police Officer 2 Elmer Cano, 44, was on his way to the San Pascual police station when he was assigned, at around 9:20 a.m. when he was ambushed by an unidentified assailant, said Acting Supt. Ramil Aghoreg, the town police chief, in a phone interview.

Aghoreg said Cano, who was shot in the left neck, was rushed to the hospital in Bauan town by village watchmen but the policeman was pronounced dead on arrival. Police have arrested a suspect identified as alias "Boy" who is detained at the San Pascual police station. *Marvin Cielo Landrio, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

NEGROS

Fugitive surrenders

A MURDER suspect and self-confessed notorious kidnap-for-ransom gang leader surrendered to Ozamiz Mayor Enrico Ejercito on Tuesday, without arms, in clear his name, said Misamis police chief Senior Supt. Norberto Dilanguil.

Palacio was charged with murder, with no bail recommended, in 2000 before a regional trial court in Misamis City, for his alleged involvement in robbery-related killings in that province.

He would be turned over to the court after necessary documentation and debriefing of the Ozamiz police, said Dilanguil. Palacio, Dilanguil added, decided to return home to Barangay Bitanagan, Naga in Ozamiz to alleviate himself from the pain and torment inflicted on him by the New People's Army during the time he was a member of the rebel group. *Jonas Zuñiga Cebilla, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

PANGASINAN

4 dead in smashup

FOUR people were killed and 13 others hurt on Friday when a turbo-charged vegetable truck smashed into seven other vehicles along the MacArthur Highway in Rosales town, police said.

Police said the truck driver, Glen Cosmos, 46, of La Trinidad, Benguet, was navigating the Dau-Tarlac-Tayug-Bridge at about 1:40 p.m. when his truck lost its brakes and rammed three tricycles, two motorcycles and a private jeep, all parked along the highway. The truck then slammed into a dump truck.

Pronounced dead at a nearby hospital were Mary Jane Gadiano, Jason Flores and Ferdinand Aquino. The fourth fatality, identified only as Rowena, died at the hospital on Friday night. Four of those hurt remained in the hospital for various injuries.

The smashup stopped traffic for nearly five hours in one of the busiest intersections in the town. *Cesar Ian Cabrera and Yolanda Sotelo, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

CAGAYAN

Forester slay suspect yields

THE SUSPECTED assassin of Cagayan forester Melissa Dinan has surrendered to the police on Friday, three days after he was positively identified via closed-circuit television (CCTV) footage that recorded the Feb. 7 murder in Sanchez Mira town.

Antonette Galigan Jr. of Barangay Pata West in Ebana's town surrendered to the Sanchez Mira police, said Cagayan police director Senior Supt. Max Adriano. Galigan was turned over to the Cagayan police office "for tactical interrogation," he said. Police said Galigan's features were broadcast on television when authorities released the CCTV footage.

Galigan was identified as the man who had clocked down on illegal timber poaching in Sanchez Mira. *Villamor Visaya Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon*

EVENT

Divine Mother retreat

"THE SUMMIT" Lighthouse's study group of the Philippines is holding a spiritual retreat on March 2-4 at the Punta de Isolar Resort in Nasugbu, Batangas.

Rev. David Diva, the spiritual director, and Rev. Carla Rady of the 501 Island Diamond Ministry will conduct the retreat, on the "Science of the Culture of the Divine Mother" retreat. participants may learn about the ancient civilizations of Lemuria and discover powerful tools to restore the peace, beauty and/or prosperity of nations according to the teachings of the ascended masters.

For details, call 09263382114, 09 15 2 382238 and 09 0 4963672 or visit www.divinemotherretreat.org

Camarines Norte encounter: 2 NPA suspects, 2 kids dead

By Joan Bocandor Jr., James Salvo and Mar Argueliez
Inquirer Southern Luzon

NAGA CITY—A clash between government troops and suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels left two young brothers and two men dead, and a girl wounded in exchange of gunfire on Saturday in Barangay Mahawa in Labo town, Camarines Norte, an Army official said on Monday.

Killed in the crossfire were Michael Manzano, 10, and his brother Herbert, 7, Lt. Col. Epimaco Wenceslao, commander of the Army's 49th Infantry Battalion in Camarines Norte, said.

Their sister, Lenaro, 14, was wounded in the thigh.

Macalinog and Lenaro pointed at one of the slain men, identified as Benjamin Manzano, as her father. But Wenceslao said he had yet to be determined, was said to be in Manila at that time.

Macalinog could not say if Benjamin was an NPA rebel or just been but explained that a firearm was found near his body by soldiers scouring the house after the rebels fled.

The slain NPA rebel was identified as Rafael Llanito, alias "Ka Gepi," alleged vice commander of the regional guerrilla unit.

Presence of rebels

Maj. Angelo Guzman, 9th Infantry Division spokesperson, said in a separate interview that the soldiers from the 49th Infantry Battalion were checking a report about the presence of at least 15 communist rebels in Barangay Mahaya of Labo town.

Guzman said that at about 1 p.m. on Saturday, while the soldiers were approaching a nipa hut, rebels with high-powered rifles fired from inside the hut, leading to a 10-minute exchange.

Guzman said soldiers clearing the area later discovered that two rebels had died in the crossfire and requested the provincial police to conduct an investigation.

Loreto was brought by the soldiers to the Camarines Norte Provincial Hospital, Macalinog said. Alde was declared to sustain multiple injuries.

The two firearms that the military recovered from the scene of the encounter—M16 and M14 rifles—were turned over to the provincial police investigators.

Brig. Gen. Jesse Gaverza, commander of the Army's 9th Infantry Division based in Camp Elias Angeles in Pili, Camarines Sur, said he was conducting with the family of the children.

But he blamed their deaths on the rebels who, he said, fired the first shot.

CAMERA TOTING tourists stick away as the colorful floral floats pass by

FESTIVAL FAVORITE A fire-breathing dragon made up of flowers joins Baguio City's Panagbenga Festival parade along Session Road.

Panagbenga is symbol of rise of Baguio, says tourism chief

From page A1

tourists every [illegible] Baguio, they would see flowers blooming everywhere," he said on Sunday on the sidelines of the parade.

Although the festival has yearround flowers since its establishment in 1995, the blooms are actually grown and sold by farmers in neighboring La Trinidad, Benguet.

The festival was designed in 1995 by John Hay Poro Point Development Corp. (JPDC, now John Hay Management Corp., or JHMC) to draw back tourists to the city, which had to rebuild following the 1990 Luzon earthquake, a company statement said.

JHMC credits lawyer Bernard Bangayan Jr., JPDC vice president, for conceptualizing the festival. The first festival was staged in February 1996.

Jimenez said the flowers festival was one of the many Philippine festivals which the government has been marketing to the international market. He said the government expected to draw to the country this year up to 4.2 million foreign tourists.

The Department of Tourism (DOT) seeks to attract 10 million tourists by 2016, the tourism chief said.

More fun

Asked about the new DOT slogan, "It's More Fun in the Philippines," Jimenez said reporters that it was working because it was generating awareness and recall among locals who wanted to explore the country and among foreign tourists.

Jimenez said improving tourism infrastructure was also a priority, with the government seeing its rights on the airport and considering of privatizing airports within two and a half years to increase tourist arrivals.

Mayor Mauricio Domogan said, "Jimenez's proposal is a challenge to us and a big obligation. We should listen our advisor] so plant flowers in our available spaces for us to justify [that title], and for us to carry the [distinction] of having the best festival [in the Philippines]."

Anthony de Leon, the chair of the festival's executive committee, said Baguio could host Jimenez's challenge given the city's role as a major trading center for Cordillera's flower growers.

Highlight

Sunday's floral floats parade, the highlight of the Panagbenga, drew thousands of visitors who jammed along the parade route on Session and Harrison Roads as early as 6 a.m.

A group of tourists from Metro Manila started occupying a section of a sidewalk on Session Road as early as 3:30 a.m., about five hours before the floats rolled down the streets.

"The waiting period was longer than the parade itself," said Zen Buenaseda, a resident of Metro Manila.

Domogan said tourists made up the audience of the parade, which began with the street dancing competition on Saturday.

"Only a few residents of Baguio watched the parade on the streets. Most of the people who watched were outsiders. Baguio people watched the parade on television," Domogan said. "Maybe the residents decided to give way to the tourists."

Battle of networks

Like its previous years, the parade of flowers was a battle between the broadcasting television networks.

ABS-CBN's float featured its "Showtime" stars Vice Ganda, Jhong Hilario, Kim Atienza, Ryan Bang and musicians Jugs Jugueta and Teddy Corpuz.

The stand-off winners roughs Dingdong Dantes and Marian Rivera rode GMA Network's float, while Aiko Melendez, Cesar Montano, Bubbles Paraiso, comedian Ai-Ai de las Alas and comedienne Pauleen Luna were featured on TV 5's float.

IBF light flyweight champion Johnrel Custodio was on a float sponsored by a clothing official brand.

Cashing in

Among the floats that stood the crowd were the city government's "Happy Walk," the Baguio Country Club's "Best Wars" and SM City Baguio's dragon-inspired float.

The festival gave business establishments along Session Road an opportunity to cash in on the crowds, with several restaurants and fast food chains offering their balconies, verandas and window-side tables for reservations to festival-goers on Saturday and Sunday.

The restaurants required diners to buy packages ranging P2,000 and P3,000 worth of food per window-side tables.

Entertainment started undertaking early. In January, it tapped its Facebook page to offer window-side tables to locals and tourists for P1,000 a piece.

The reservation was good from 7 to 11 a.m., which coincided with the street dancing competition and the floral floats parade.

A fast food chain resorted to "ordering for guests of a loyal hotel. It charged P3,000 for two hours, from 8 to 10 a.m.

Reports from the Baguio-Benguet Public Information and Civic Action Group said at least 15 people sought medical assistance, most of them complaining of hypoglycemia [symptoms include palpitations, nausea, and weakness due to low blood sugar] and hypertension.

Bus hit car

Many volunteer groups assisting the festival rushed to Marcos Highway in the final stages of the parade because of a road accident at 10:20 a.m.

A Lizardo bus bound for Aparri hit a car after its driver lost control of the vehicle. The bus hit its brakes along Hilo Boulevard in Tuba, Benguet, police said.

SPO3 Marcial Cortez said the bus driver, Eduardo Awang, switched lanes to avoid hitting a vehicle in front of his bus but hit the car on the opposite lane instead.

The car's driver, Leonal Franco Carvonino, and three of his passengers, were hurt, Cortez said.

With reports from Vincent Galvoso, Ajik Fernandez, Colleen Ribao, Conrado Bernas, Chairmaye Myrtle and Jennifer Reyes, Inquirer Northern Luzon

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HOME NEEDS

CONSTRUCTION NEEDS

Too early to see guilty verdict, says prosecution

By GMA Cabanatuan

SPOKESPERSON for the House prosecution panel yesterday said it was too early to say whether it had presented enough evidence to convince at least 36 senator-judges to convict Chief Justice Renato Corona until Palace calls to end the trial soon and avoid what it described as public "fatigue."

"It's difficult to say because most senators seem to be holding their cards close to their chest...let's speak. Only a handful seem to openly display their preference in the course of the trial and even those could see he said to be definitive, at least not until there has been an arrest of voting," said Ancient Rep. Juan Edgardo Angara.

"We have not stopped because there is still evidence that has not been presented. We have not begun the process of actually counting the votes that are needed since it is premature," said Marikina Rep. Bernardo Quimbo.

But Bataan Vibar has told reporters that he supported the prosecution's conclusion with its presentation of evidence because it was not confident that it had done enough to pin down Corona in at least nine of the eight articles of impeachment.

"If they have the numbers, they would vote their case," Vibar said in an interview.

Palace spokesperson Edwin Lacierda last week urged the prosecution to speed a protracted trial because the public was noticeably losing interest in it and the work of Congress was being affected.

"I think there will be fatigue if the trial drags on. And in the examinations of the prosecutors, they have already proven some of the articles as it's a judgment call on the part of the prosecutors," said Lacierda, who warned the prosecution to end its presentation by March.

Hard to predict

But Quimbo said it was difficult to predict the senators' verdict on evidence presented in the impeachment trial.

"Unfortunately that the defense has not even presented its witnesses yet, we cannot expect all the senators to have already made up their mind," he said.

One of the prosecutors, Isabela Rep. Gwenjel Aggabao, said his team was seriously considering wrapping up its case soon.

"We have abbreviated Article 1 [of the impeachment complaint], and we will send up Article 7 with one more hearing day and be ready to rest our case. Here it rests for the intended inquiry on the prosecution of the Pilipark bank records of Corona, we would definitely be ready to rest with the defense evidence at this time. All told, the prosecution is very confident of conviction," Aggabao said.

Ibilipun Rep. Walden Bello reiterated with Aggabao that the prosecution has a very strong case on Articles 1 and 7 and that the senators had no choice but to convict Corona.

Quimbo and Angara said the big discrepancy between what Corona disclosed in his assets and cash holdings in his statement of assets, liabilities and net worth and what was exposed in the course of the trial was too big to dismiss as an honest mistake, as the defense alleged.

The two said Corona's loss to award former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was also too obvious to ignore by the senators, especially in view of how Corona went out of his way allegedly to subvert the travel ban on former imposed by the Department of Justice.

Row over testimony of SC justice looms

From page A1

"What the time comes for the defense to present its case, what would prevent them from inviting other justices who, as you say, were critical of Justice Serreno's dissenting opinion? The prosecution can't claim this (privilege) alone."

Senate Majority Leader Alexander Enrile III said he would give a "sword of caution" to fellow senator-judges when the impeachment trial on the matter at 11 a.m. today.

"There might be a conflict within the Supreme Court and we might only worsen it," Enrile said to Filipino in a separate interview.

Prosecution team Serreno, an appointee of President Aquino, is hostile on her dissenting opinion on the effectivity of the high tribunal's Nov. 13, 2011, temporary restraining order (TRO).

Rep. Miguela Rep. Neri Colmenares said the prosecution would like Serreno's dissenting opinion.

Serreno argued that the TRO was "legally ineffective" because Arroyo's camp had failed to comply with the condition to post bail for its appeal a legal impeachment case. will be overwhelmingly, which would effectively bar Corona from his post.

Colmenares said the prosecution would like to submit as evidence Serreno's dissenting opinion.

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Legally ineffective

Justice Secretary Leila de Lima duels heavily on Serreno's dissenting opinion when she recalled her words as part of the prosecution's effort to show that Corona had favored former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo through the issuance of the TRO. The Senate ruled that Dr. Lima's testimony was "hearsay" and that the lone evidence was Serreno's dissenting opinion.

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Colmenares said the prosecution would like to submit as evidence

No seafood splurge in Lent, says bishop

From page A1

...dulent while enjoying products.

Bishop Oliveros said...

Archbishop Ledesma Buyl...

Bayani Road in Alabang, has another piece of advice. Why not also cut down on excessive eating?

Bayani said that in these modern times, eating up on the build of sacrificing lent messages as well as internet surfing—"temporarily at least—could counter a form of sacrifice in the observance of Lent.

In Europe—where Lent is a major component of the ...ahead, since during Lent was a big success, according to Cruz.

But the meaning has been blurred when the practice was brought to Asia, particularly the Philippines.

Here on 83-percent Roman Catholic country, the Philippines is also known as the leading exporter of the world.

Fiesta time

"In the Philippines, it's also a fiesta. It's a big feast," Cruz said in an interview. "Fasting, abstinence is a big concern because you can eat a lot, drink a lot, celebrate, whatever."

The retreat and fasting could be seen leading to advice on personal experience. When he was in the seminary and in charge of food monitoring, he thought of all kinds of method for him and his buddy and all the Fridays of Lent.

"It was tasty for us because then we served delicacies like crabs, shrimps. They are more delicious as I feel the sense of sacrifice of a law that was made in Exodus," Cruz said.

He suggested that the usual "Typical Pinoy" to ask for Lent to turn its usual meaning over to eat less seafood, too.

Time for moderation

During Lent, a 40-day preparation for the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the faithful are expected to exercise moderation.

Cruz said there were other ways to observe fasting and abstinence not only from food, particularly meat. One form of ways that this Lent is to refrain from doing what one enjoys the most, he said.

"For example, I am a computer so during Lent, I make sure not to touch my ...," he said.

"There are so many things that, given you pleasure right? Food from McDonald's can give you pleasure."

One said the task and the order were exempted from reading and abstinence from meat. But they should pray the rosary as a sacrifice, he said.

Sincere sacrifice

Bautista, the chair of the Episcopal Commission on Youth of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), said sacrifice during Lent should not only mean avoiding meat on Fridays but also mentioned that one should not also just food, sweets and soft drinks.

To experience a meaningful Lent, the faithful should also abstain from vices and from indulging in luxury and leisure. Bautista said in the CBCPNews, the official news service of the CBCP.

"If health conscious people indulge diet and other forms of food to get slim and fit to maintain natural beauty, why can't we improve the same discipline to make ourselves beautiful inside, too?" Bautista said.

He added: "Getting thinner means excessive fasting. At the last meeting, smoking, drinking alcohol are done going on vacations this coming—are other ways to make a sincere sign this this Lent."

"The point of abstinence is detaching our senses of the things that give us comfort and luxury. It is disowning discipline so our body so that we may free up our souls," he said.

Bayani reminded the faithful, particularly the youth, that Lent was a ...

...the Church Year Christmas.

"This Lent that leads to Easter, when we are reminded that Jesus sacrificed his life for our sins," he explained.

Improper perspective

Bayani said that being to do joy and glitter—recently due to its "excessive celebration"—more ...ing, smoking, drinking alcohol ...

Palace: It's up to Naguiat to quit or go on leave

NAGUIAT

doing his job to turn Pagcor into one of the major contributors of revenue to the Philippine government and people.

'Nothing wrong'

Naguiat added: "I have done nothing wrong and have not violated any laws. My vision is on doing my job—fulfilling Pagcor's mission to provide world-class gaming for Filipinos and tourists in an honest, regulated environment and to contribute significant revenues to help build the Philippine nation.

"I will not be distracted from the mission by an internal company dispute. I am what I have always been since the start of my chairmanship—a public servant, nothing more and nothing less."

Sour graping

The chair of the Senate committee on games and amusement yesterday said Wynn's charges were just sour grapes.

Manila Rep. Amado Bagatsing is set to hold a press conference today before the 1:30 p.m. hearing on the status of the multibillion-peso casino projects in Pagcor's Entertainment City.

"I will have the true intentions of Wynn and why he is using Pagcor to attain his objective," Bagatsing said in a text message. The Wynn is embarrassing the country for his selfish goals."

Bagatsing said that Naguiat was unfairly "vilified" by Wynn who just wanted to get back at Okada.

Okada earlier used Wynn for making an inappropriate $120-million donation to University of Macau. In retaliation, Wynn filed the lawsuit against Okada to forcibly buy him out of his 20-percent stake in Wynn Resorts.

Wynn, erstwhile partner of Okada in Wynn Resorts and Wynn Macau, said in the lawsuit that Naguiat, his wife, three children, a nanny and other Pagcor officials stayed in luxurious Wynn Macau hotel rooms during a five-day stay in September 2010.

The family reportedly stayed in the resort's most expensive villa at $6,000 a night.

Chanel bag

The lawsuit said the Pagcor chair also requested and received a Chanel bag worth more than $1,000 for his wife and that Okada, chair of Universal Entertainment Corp., ordered that each of the Philippine guests be given $5,000 for shopping.

The case was based on a report prepared by the firm's board by Louis J. Freeh, a former director of the federal Bureau of Investigation.

Excerpts from the report cited by the New York Times:

"Sept. 22, 2010 (14:00): Wynn Macau sends 3 Bells Buyer and 3 Hyatted to the airport, along with Macau Avid, Special Assistant to Mr. Okada; and Stockton Pinecastle, another Universal associate, to meet arriving party, who arrived on Philippine Airlines Flight 102 from Manila. They return with Chairman Cristino L. Naguiat, Rogelio Bargad and Jeffrey Quintos at 14:48:19. Only Mr. Bargad furnishes his name upon registration. Ms Lai and Wynn Macau VIP Services manager Ellen Wong thereafter escorts Pagcor website and identifies Chairman Naguiat's name from his picture there. Ms Wong's log and ongoing emails refer to [Unregistered] Mr. Naguiat, Cristino L.[.]

"Pagcor occupies Villa 81, the most expensive accommodation at Wynn Resorts Macau (about 7,000 square feet in size, which rises over about $6,000 per day and is usually reserved for 'high rollers').

"Sept. 23, 2010: The Wynn Encore big-bonds civilness Tarragona (Mr. Naguiat) stayed in Villa 81 Master Bedroom[.]"

"The evidence also shows that several weeks after Chairman Naguiat's invited Tarragona' stay at Villa 81, Mr. Okada's associates became concerned about the high cost of Chairman Naguiat's luxury stay at Wynn Resorts Macau SpenWolfe Mr Okada's associates advised Wynn Resorts Macau that the amounts being charged for Chairman Naguiat's stay was too much over an ordinary business expense.

"Mr. Okada's associates then asked if Wynn Resorts Macau 'could reconsider the matter (Chairman Naguiat's stay) and charge us [Mr. Okada's company]' the original rate (and free upgrade to a villa) since the party directly dealing with us this matter is our company [Mr. Okada's company] rather than each individual guest [Chairman Naguiat]." Mr. Okada's associate further stated that 'since the amount charged [for Chairman Naguiat] is too much beyond the ordinary room charge, our company [Mr. Okada's company] will be put in a very difficult position to give reasonable explanations if we are inquired by someone.'"

Industry practice

Naguiat denied receiving any cash benefits from Okada and said his acceptance of hotel accommodations from Wynn was an industry practice. He also said he immediately informed the Chanel bag.

"Any call for resignation or for any official to take a leave, we leave it to the discretion of that official on how to take the call for resignation or for voluntary leave," Abiss said in an interview over government radio dzSB.

"So it's up to Chairman Naguiat on what his response would be in this call," she added.

Unfortunate casualty

"[Naguiat] is the unfortunate casualty of a corporate war," Bitay said in his statement. "He has already refuted the allegations made by our party in the dispute."

The Pagcor chief—a classmate of Mr. Aquino at Ateneo de Manila University—was actively involved in the 2010 presidential campaign, and it believed to be allied with the so-called Ateneo group that supported an Aquino-Binay ticket against the rival Aquino-Roxas tandem of the Roxas group.

Naguiat earlier said the lawsuit filed by Wynn Resorts against Okada "is a business dispute now which I have been dragged."

He described the charges against him as "outrageous, pathetically motivated and untrue."

Naguiat said he would "not be distracted by this issue" and would remain focused on

SPORTS
Editor Teddyboy S. Melendres
Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

POWERADE'S Francis Allera (left) and Team Anthony hunter Mendoza's Chris Ross during last night's match

Powerade, TNT share lead at 2-0

By Jane Navarro

NOT EVEN the specter of losing a key player could crush the resolve of the ride-hungry Powerade Tigers.

Coming off a nine-day rest, the Tigers kept pace with the Mercado Hollo for three quarters before finishing with a flourish to outscore a Gin Kings team last night and grab the lead in the PBA Commissioner's Cup.

Gary David had 29 points, both personal highs, including five three-pointers and nine of 22 field goal shooting, rookie Marcio Lassiter, the winner of crash-talks which his coach Jimmy Alapag added 19 points, while Dwayne Jones compiled 13 points, 14 rebounds and six blocks as the Tigers picked up a second straight victory.

Talk 'N Text (two double figures from five listed players to topple Alaska, 110-98, to the second game and duplicate Powerade's 2-0 start.

Omar Samhan was saddled with fouls and played for only 26 minutes after leaving his knee early in the fourth but the Tropang Texters, the Philippine Cup champions, knocked down six of their last eight attempts, including three three-pointers, to stop the rampaging Aces.

Ahead by just five, successive threes by Samahl Sir Dempsey, Jason Castro and Larry Hunter sealed Alaska's second defeat in four games.

"We're here to win the championship and I don't think any trade to get the team [free up] will help achieve that," said Powerade coach Bo Perasol, referring to management's plan to trade Lassiter to Petron which was initially rejected by league commissioner Chito Salud.

Powerade acting governor Ronald Asmundo had declared during a recent PBA Board of Governors meeting that he or anybody for nothing less than the crossover/crossover would speculations that the Tigers draw is up for sale.

The Tigers marked the All-Filipino finals in the last conference against TNT and then raised a lot of eyebrows with their decision to drop Lassiter to Petron for Rabih Al Hussaini and Ben Guevarra.

Trailing by seven halfway into the third, the Tigers chipped away at the lead and caught the Hollo on a battling drive by Lassiter.

Jones then added a jaw-dropping dunk off a steal, a slashing layup and a free throw to cap Powerade's 13-0 run for a 68-62 lead.

The ensuing Hollo-Ace defensive liner minutes, the Hollo regained composure through consecutive three pointers by Ed Mercado and Mark Macapagal that forced the last deadlock at 88.

But another seven-footer Ranidel Ramon nor Johnson Mercado, who missed Mercado's first three games, could prevent the Hollo from plummeting to their third defeat in four outings.

The Hollo dropped into the cellar with Sun or Shone and Barako Bull. Another loss could mean an early exit from the playoffs for the three.

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HOME

All set for 11th Ateneo de Zamboanga alumni golf tourney

ZTAAI, trustees go for the holding of the annual Ateneo de Zamboanga Metro Manila Alumni Association golf tournament at the Executive course of the Valley Golf & Country Club in Antipolo on March 16. Tournament director and AZAMMAA board member Jimmy Pangandaman said.

The tournament is open to all members, friends, guests and sponsors of AZAMMAA, an association of Ateneo de Zamboanga elementary, college in Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

Tee-off is at 8 a.m. on a first-come-first-serve basis on sign-up of three or four.

Aplus METRO
Editor Joseph Voltaire L. Contreras

'Helpful' Manila policeman in hot water for duping unsuspecting housemaid

By Jayrose T. Cantil

MANILA Police Station 6 in Ermita has no villain.

A policeman who saved a house maid from being victimized by the "shape-shaper" gang has been arrested after he took the maid-caller canvas for the group of swindlers.

HELPFUL MANILA, 6A

Frat leader faces raps in hazing death

By Nitz Cuñeta

THE ANTIPOLO police will soon file charges against the leader of the fraternity believed to be responsible for the death through hazing of San Beda law student Marvin Reglos as an official said there was enough evidence to link Eduardo Esmbal II to the case.

"Everyone in the fraternity is a suspect, especially their Grand Master," Senior Insp. Ronald Linsangan, head of the Antipolo police investigation unit, said yesterday.

At the highest official of the Lambda Beta Phi Fraternity Esmbal holds the title of "Grand Master." On Friday he went to the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) to be denied any involvement in the initiation rites held last week in Antipolo City where Reglos, 23, was killed.

Esmbal was later allowed to go home because officials said that he was not yet a suspect.

According to Linsangan, the police will file a supplemental complaint for the initiation of Esmbal and 15 other suspects whom they have already identified.

"The evidences we have now is enough to file charges against them," he added.

Earlier, the police filed charges against San Sebastian College students Erick Castillo and Boljie Sipi who remain detained at the Antipolo police headquarters. Also charged were Arjay Gregorio, Jofbil Mobida and several John Does who remain at large.

All of them are facing murder charges in relation with the fatal hazing. Lou, which, according to the police, is a combustible offense.

Sources added that after some meditations, they were able to confirm that the red Honda City which was used by several men to bring Reglos to Graham Medical City was owned by Esmbal's father.

The police went to Esmbal's house in San Pedro City last week to inquire about the red car but they were told that the Esmbals were no longer staying there while the car had been sold to someone else.

"Now, we have witnesses who will prove Esmbal was there during the hazing. We are just verifying the information and we will file a case against him and the others soon," he said.

DID YOU KNOW

PEOPLE Filipino was born on Feb. 27, 1888, in Sta. Cruz, Manila. After graduating from Ateneo Municipal de Manila, he pursued his studies in Spain where he mingled with Filipino propagandists. In 1887 he served as a medical assistant to Filipino revolutionary leader Emilio Aguinaldo and the Spanish government. This resulted in the Pact of Biak-na-Bato. Paterno was elected president of the Malolos Congress after Aguinaldo proclaimed Philippine independence in 1898. He died in Manila on March 11, 1911.

Gerhard Gonzalez, Inquirer Research

Unified traffic ticketing system in Metro soon a reality

By Miko Morales

THE IMPLEMENTATION of the long-overdue single traffic ticketing system in Metro Manila may begin anytime this week, according to Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chair Francis Tolentino.

Under the policy all traffic fines and penalties will be consolidated into a single scheme and a unified traffic ticket will be used by all local government units (LGUs) in the metropolis.

Tolentino said yesterday that he had been coordinating with the National Printing Office regarding the printing of the new traffic citation receipts.

"Hopefully by March 1, we could start implementing it," he said in a radio interview.

After intense legal wrangling among mayors, the MMDA and even transport groups whose members had been complaining about the different traffic policies being implemented by LGUs, the system should streamline the issuance of citation tickets, Tolentino added.

With its effectivity, all local traffic bureaus will now recognize citation tickets issued outside their respective areas, he explained.

But clarifying the penalties imposed on traffic violators was another matter altogether, he quickly added.

"That would require each of the 17 city councils to amend their traffic codes through ordinances," Tolentino said. "For now, what's important is that the unified ticket is recognized in all cities."

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Car thieves strike in QC

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A policeman lost a pickup truck to armed car thieves in front of the mall of Switzerland in Quezon City on Saturday night, according to police reports.

SOS Deanna Talen of the Quezon City Police District said that the stolen vehicle was a black 2011 Toyota Hilux with plate number TBV-248.

He identified the owner as Alfredo Caparino, 34, a resident of the city.

Caparino told the police that he and his driver had just had dinner at Ping Ping Restaurant on A. Bonifacio and Mariveles Streets in Barangay Damar, Bandok and were about to board the vehicle when several armed men approached them and demanded the car keys.

He said that there were several other diners at the restaurant when the car thieves appeared although he did not know if they noticed the commotion.

Caparino said if not at gunpoint, he and his driver were told to get into the pickup.

He added that the armed men drove the vehicle around for a few minutes before they made for Caloocan City where he and his driver were told to get out of the pickup.

METROBRIEF

Fire hits guns firm

A FIRE believed to have been triggered by the sweltering heat razed the storage room of a firearms and ammunition firm in Marikina City yesterday afternoon. Arif Nur Bin, spokesman of the Bureau of Fire Protection in Barangay Fortune, informed by a local resident. Arson investigator SFO1 Noel Garcia said that luckily, firefighters managed to contain the blaze in the warehouse although it reached the second storey before it was put out at 2:20 p.m. "There was also a fire wall around the warehouse which prevented the spread of the fire to the residential houses near it," Garcia added. The blaze, however, destroyed gunpowder and other weapons equipment worth P1 million. *Rita Cahiga*

'Helpful' Manila cop nabbed

Front page 4-22

Geraldine Tanseron, 20, the helper of a businesswoman in Caloocan City, said that on Saturday she received a call from a man, an who told her that the reader lost two cellphone and their driver went in the hospital after an accident.

The woman then ordered her to retrieve a watch in her employer's bedroom and bring it to the hospital. "I was ordered not to tell anyone because (my employer) did not want media attention. I was told the family's phones were still with the police so I shouldn't try to contact them either," Tanseron said.

Tanseron said the cook Ge called to mind for it because she seemed to know a lot about her and her employer and even where the vault was. Tanseron ended up following even the unusual instructions, taking the Landliner off the hook so no one could call the house. The caller, instead, contacted Tanseron on her cellphone.

After taking the novel vault from the second floor bedroom, Tanseron headed a cab to take her to the hospital in Manila.

But the taxi driver, Hadji Hendaima of Las Piñas City, sensed something was amiss and brought her to a police precinct on Epifanio Tayaman Street when cursed out to Sr. PO1 Dominic Lappay of the Manila Police District (MPD) Traffic Enforcement Unit.

Lappay accompanied Tanseron on the taxi ride to hospital. He also answered her cell phone and identified himself to the caller as a policeman. This appeared to unravel the caller all, because upon reaching the hospital, she no longer responded to Tanseron's texts and calls.

Tanseron got out of the cab to reload her cell phone, but upon her return, the driver and Lappay had made off with the vault.

She returned to her employer who accompanied her to the police. It check with Senior Insp. Sharing de la Cruz of the MPD Homicide Section turned up Lappay's name and on Sunday morning, he was arrested and the vault recovered.

"He said he was going to turn over the vault to Major Alfredo Lim on Monday but that assisted like an afterthought. He should have immediately reported it to his superior," De la Cruz said.

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of His love at the Remedios Trinidad Romualdez Hospital –

As we bid you farewell, may the LORD keep you in His loving heart.
Thank you, we love you, and we shall miss you!

Pakistan razes compound where Bin Laden hid

ISLAMABAD – Pakistani authorities moved on Saturday to demolish the house where Osama bin Laden died as the hands of a heavily armed unit last May, erasing a three-story building that had acquired a painful symbolism for Pakistan's powerful military which was badly embarrassed by the raid.

Working by floodlight, operators of heavy machinery broke through the tall perimeter wall of the 3,000-square-metre compound in Abbottabad, 35 miles north of Islamabad, after dusk on Saturday. Hours later they started to knock down the main house where Bin Laden lived with his family and three smaller buildings.

A local official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said the military handed control of the house to the district administration on Saturday after a Shiite ceremony, and then demolition began soon after that.

The operation was awaited in considerable secrecy. Military personnel cordoned off the area around the compound, keeping reporters away. Bin Laden's house has been under renovation for the past months, several foreigners who tried to visit it, including French and British journalists and the Danish ambassador, were detained before being sent back to Islamabad.

A BBC reporter who slipped through the security cordon said he could see that three quarters of the house had been destroyed by 1:30 a.m. on Sunday.

A Pakistani government commission investigating the circumstances related to Bin Laden's stay in Pakistan, led by a Supreme Court judge, is preparing to release its report. The military is also still holding all questions.

The military faced unprecedented criticism at home and abroad after the May 2 raid, when the SEALs flew undetected into Pakistan, stormed the house and shot the al-Qaeda leader to the head. The Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate, in particular, faced sharp scrutiny when it emerged that the world's most wanted man had been hiding within a few hundred yards of the Pakistan Military Academy, Pakistan's version of West Point, probably since the house was built in 2005.

Late December Bit Abid Lt. Gen Ahmed Shuja Pasha told the official inquiry team that his spies had been unaware of Bin Laden's presence.

In Washington, US officials said they had been caught off guard by reports of the demolition of Bin Laden's house.

The Pakistanis have been saying for a while that they wanted to do this, but the timing came as a complete surprise," said one administration official who follows Pakistan closely, and who was not authorized to speak publicly about the matter.

With the anniversary of the raid that killed Bin Laden coming up, he added, "the Pakistanis really don't want to have all this attention around it."

The official also spoke on condition of anonymity, said the house's destruction would not have any significant effect on efforts to rebuild troubled relations between the United States and Pakistan, which have been virtually frozen since a CIA airstrike killed 24 Pakistani troops near the Afghan border in November.

Described as an "extraordinary, bespoke" house worth $1 million by one Obama administration official in the hours after the raid, the house later turned out to be a more modest and cramped building. Pakistani investigators counted 27 people, including 16 children and three wives of Bin Laden, living in the 10-room main house and the guesthouse.

Bin Laden, who had a $25 million US bounty on his head, reportedly moved into the house after it was completed in 2005 under the supervision of two Pakistani brothers who appeared to have been in charge of his security. One of the men, Arshad Khan, known by US intelligence as "the courier," bought the property in three separate lots between 2004 and 2005 for $40,000, local property records showed.

Bin Laden was eventually joined by his wives, the youngest of whom, Amal Ahmed al-Sadah from Yemen, gave birth to two children while living in the compound. The three women are currently in the custody of Pakistani intelligence, and have been interviewed by US officials.

The CIA director, Leon E. Panetta, publicly raised questions recently about why Pakistani authorities failed to detect the presence of Bin Laden. "It was the largest compound in the area," he told the CBS News program "60 Minutes" in an interview broadcast last month. "So, you would have thought that somebody would have asked the question, 'What the hell's going on there?'" – Associated Press Wire Service

RESIDENTS watch ongoing demolition of the compound where al-Qaida chief Osama bin Laden was shot last year. AP

Court junks bribery case vs Berlusconi

BERLUSCONI AFP/FILE

MILAN – An Italian court threw out bribery charges against Silvio Berlusconi under the statute of limitations Saturday after a five-year trial, in another jolt and victory for the former prime minister.

Prosecutors had called for a five-year prison term for the ex-premier, who was accused of having paid off his former British tax lawyer David Mills to provide false testimony in his favor in two trials in the 1990s.

Judge Fernanrisa Wide spent three hours considering the verdict after defense lawyers presented their closing case, but took under a minute to read a packed court that she ruled that the case had run out of time allowed by law.

Prosecutor Fabio di Pasquale looked downcast and told waiting hordes of journalists: "I just want to get out of here."

The court is expected to present its findings within 90 days, which will reveal whether the three judges heading the trial endorsed Berlusconi's claim to be completely absolved".

The media magnate, who has always protested his innocence, was not in court. He had left Rome for Milan yesterday morning, but had travelled to the northern hill-city to see his football team AC Milan play Juventus.

He told journalists at the stadium later that "justice has half been done". Despite his being convicted several times of corruption and false accounting in the past, all cases against Berlusconi have either been overturned or expired after years of moving laboriously through Italy's justice system. AFP

WORLDBRIEFS

2 US troops shot in Kabul as Koran protests rage

KABUL, Afghanistan – A gunman has killed two American military servicemen with shots to the back of the head inside a heavily guarded ministry building, and Kabul has ordered military workers out of Afghan ministries as protests raged for a fifth day over the burning of copies of the Koran at a US army base. The Taliban claimed responsibility for Saturday's lethal ministry attack, making it one retaliation for the Koran burnings, after the US servicemen – a lieutenant colonel and a major – were found dead on the floor of an office that only people who know a numerical combination can get into. Afghan and Western officials said. The top commander of US paritiaipn forces recalled all international military personnel from the ministries, an unprecedented action in the decade-long war that highlights the growing friction between Afghans and their foreign partners at a critical juncture in the war. AP

In face of violence, Yemen swears in new president

SANAA, Yemen – Yemen's th streets president in more than three decades even as on Saturday talking over the government of a country with a broken economy, crumbling infrastructure, vowed separatist movements, an active al-Qaida branches and Islamist militants in control of large swaths of territory After a year of antigovernment protests and rising insecurity in a country the United States sees as a critical ally in the fight against al-Qaida, Yemenis were hopeful that the new government led by Abed Rabo Mansour Hadi, the former vice president, represented at least a start. But all of its wonder soon the problems Hadi faces. Hours after he took the oath of office and promised to continue the war on al-Qaeda, militants attacked government targets in the southeastern port of Mukalla, killing at least 21 soldiers. AFP/BBC

Son of Robert F. Kennedy charged with harassment

DOUGLAS, Kennedy, the youngest son of Robert F. Kennedy, the senator from New York who was assassinated in 1968, has been arraigned on charges resulting from a confrontational began as he tried to take his driver's son out of children-laden County, NC hospital. Two nurses said they were injured by Kennedy's actions. A lawyer for Kennedy gave a different account of what happened and said he did not fight the charges. AP/BBC

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If you are a student overloaded with homework, make sure to have school life balance. Despite your busy schedule, see to it that you still keep in touch with your loved ones. To help you cope with the demands of school, here are some tips.

1. **Organize.** Make a list of the things you need to do. Set group activities using reminders and calendars so you'll get more ahead of time. Send reminders to friends, as mass text powers by sending them text messages.

2. **Prioritize.** Practicing is key! Identify the urgent ones from things that can wait. Be critical items from the minor to-do items on the list. From your to-do list, mark the items due for the week so you don't miss. Once done, make sure you also tick them off your list so you are prepared to take on more tasks.

3. **Multi-tasking.** You can save time if you can do things simultaneously. While queuing at the cafeteria, organize an after school meeting with your buddies. While doing your usual commute, spare time on the exercise by cutting her up to way that you and your a night out with friends.

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The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Greco

100 killed as Syria prepares for vote

BEIRUT—The Syrian government kept up its onslaught on Homs and other towns, with at least 100 killed according to human rights campaigners, as the country prepared to hold a referendum on Sunday on a new constitution.

"No one is going to vote," activist Omar, speaking by Skype from the rebel-held Baba Amro district of Homs, said in advance of the referendum staged by President Bashar al-Assad's government.

"This was a constitution made to Bashar's terms and meanwhile we are getting shelled and killed," he added. "More than 40 people were killed today and you want us to vote in a referendum? ... No one is going to vote."

Forces loyal to Assad killed at least 100 people in Syria on Saturday in a fourth week of bombardments on the central city of Homs and suburbs on towns and villages in northern and southern provinces, the Syrian Network for Human Rights said.

Six women and 10 children were among those killed, the opposition activists' organization, which documents what it describes as killings by loyalist forces, said in a statement.

It added that the dead included 44 people in Homs and the surrounding countryside, which has been under continued shelling for more than three weeks.

In Homs, loyalist troops bombarded Sunni Muslim districts, with opposition activists reporting mortar rounds and anti-aircraft fire hitting Old Homs and the districts of Baba Amro, Bab Dreib and Bab Hreib.

Khalidiya, a neighborhood inhabited by members of Sunni tribes from the Syrian desert east of Homs, also was hit, they said. Thousands of people in Khalidiya turned up on Saturday for the funerals of at least 37 people killed in the bombardment, according to YouTube footage uploaded by activists. Another YouTube video showed Muhammad al-Shihaamad, a doctor at a makeshift hospital in Baba Amro, holding a 15-year-old boy hit in the neck by shrapnel and spitting blood.

"It is late at night and Baba Amro is still being bombarded. We can do nothing for this boy," said the doctor, who also has been treating Western journalists wounded in the city.

American correspondent Marie Colvin and French photographer Remi Ochlik were killed in the bombardment of Homs last week and other Western journalists in the city were wounded.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said it was still unable to evacuate distressed civilians from Baba Amro. After a day of talks with Syrian authorities and opposition fighters, it said there were "no concrete results".

"We continue our negotiations, hoping that tomorrow (Sunday) we will be able to evacuate Baba Amro to carry out our life-saving operations," spokesman Hicham Hassan said.

Assad has vowed to hold parliamentary elections within 90 days if voters approve the new constitution.

The measures would drop an article making the Baath party the leader of state and society, allow for political pluralism and enact a presidential limit of two seven-year terms. Reuters

Journalist Colvin killed trying to retrieve shoes

COLVIN/File undated photo

LONDON—American war correspondent Marie Colvin was killed while trying to retrieve her shoes so she could flee an army bombardment in the Syrian city of Homs, her employer The Sunday Times said.

Colvin and a group of other journalists had all followed the local custom of removing their footwear before entering a building in the besieged city which was being used as a relief press center, it said.

"The journalists were on the ground floor of the building when the upper floors were hit by rockets, the paper said in the first full account of how the attack happened.

Although they were taken in, authors Colvin ran to the hall to get her shoes back from where she had left them.

But as she reached it a rocket landed at the front of the building, burying her and French photographer Remi Ochlik in debris and killing them both, the paper said.

British photographer Paul Conroy, who was working with Colvin, and French reporter Edith Bouvier were wounded in the attack.

The Red Cross said Saturday it had failed to agree a deal to evacuate the journalists and wounded Syrians from Homs, as President Bashar al-Assad's forces resumed shelling the Baba Amro district of the city.

Britain summoned Syria's ambassador to London on Wednesday to demand the Syrian authorities facilitate "immediate arrangements for the repatriation of the journalists' bodies," as well as medical treatment for Conroy. AFP

Chronic abdominal issue puts Mandela in hospital

JOHANNESBURG—Nelson Mandela, the first black president of South Africa, was hospitalized Saturday for what officials described as a chronic abdominal issue, but his health is closely watched, a hospitalization in Johannesburg in January 2011 set off a panic across South Africa.

Mandela's last major public appearance was in 2010, at the final game of the World Cup in Johannesburg. For the past year he has spent most of his time in Qunu, the Eastern Cape village where he lived for most of his childhood.

Rumors about Mandela's health have swirled for years, even in the days after his release from prison in 1990, when apartheid was crumbling and nervous talks between the African National Congress and the governing National Party began. His lack of hesitation toward the white minority made him a global symbol of reconciliation.

Mandela was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize along with South African president at the time, F.W. de Klerk, in 1993, and elected president in 1994.

When Mandela was hospitalized last year, there was frenzied speculation in the news media in the face of virtual silence from the government. Reporters spent the night outside the hospital where he had been admitted, and many feared he was at death's door. But after two nights in the hospital he was released and went home in Qunu.

At that time, doctors treating Mandela said he was in fine form. "For a 93-year-old, his progress is on a daily basis with his powers of recovery," Lt. Gen. Nolpi Ramabulana said then. New York Times/Agence France-Presse

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Johnson, AirAsia Patriots clobber Bangkok Cobras

By Jeanina M. Payo

A FLASHY reverse slam late in the game capped another huge outing from AirAsia Philippines import Anthony Johnson.

With more heads-the powering ample support, the Patriots subdued the second-top Bangkok Cobras, 80-72, last night to solidify their hold of top spot in the Asean Basketball League at the Filoil Flying V Centre in San Juan.

"We really needed the support of the locals because [other import Halimah] Miller had been struggling the past games," said Patriots coach Glenn Capacio.

Johnson knocked in a game-high 26 points on top of 14 rebounds and one assist as the Patriots routed their rivals to six games for a 7-1 record.

Andy Lansing fired 13 points, including 10 in a second-half stretch that pushed that Patriots ahead, 70-55, while veteran guard Warren Thailes also had his most impressive outing yet with 10 markers and five assists.

The Cobras, who dipped to 5-3, proved tougher the time with Jai Reyes and two-time joining Marvin Cruz as their Filipino imports.

Reyes and Cruz impressed for the Cobras with 21 points each.

Meanwhile, San Miguel coach Bobby Parks acknowledged that overconfidence doomed the Beermen in their last outing.

On a tell the last two weeks, the Beermen blew scheme to claim sole second slot, forcing a repeat us both against the Petroguard Malaysia Dragons, 90-73, Saturday night right in San Miguel's home court.

"I think the guys didn't come out ready to play," said Parks. "We were three straight and they probably think they can just show up and automatically win. But we're not taking anything away from Malaysia, they came out and shot the ball well."

The Beermen—who also shorthed their last loss against the Dragons, 77-83, in overtime, in Kuala Lumpur last month—slipped to third at 5-3.

Since that opening-day loss, the Beermen had made key adjustments by tapping new import Doug Thomas and former PBA import Aris Dimoantoan and Jolo Mendoza.

Stalin Ilarmento, the Serbian coach who mentored the Smart Gilas national team, sat behind the Beermen's bench Saturday in his new capacity as consultant of SMC's basketball programs.

"The positive thing is [the losses happened] early in the season and we have a chance to bounce back," said Parks. "And another position to not didn't give up."

Surprising the Beermen right in the first half, the Dragons dropped a 28-4 haymaker on a 31-17 first that grew to 40-20 at halftime.

Although the Beermen rallied to move within two, 75-68, Malaysia's import Titus Wade responded with clutch free throws in the dwindling seconds.

"Every time you come down by 20 points against a good team, it's hard to come back," said Parks. "We have to be ready next game, we have to play better for sure."

UP eleven nips UST, keeps title

By Cedrik P. Rapa

SOUTHEAST Asian Games veteran Reggy Yaboyan provided the flash of inspiration as University of the Philippines nipped University of Santo Tomas, 2-0, yesterday to retain the UAAP men's football title in the Season 74 finals at Rizal Memorial Football Field.

Subsequent, last year's Rookie of the Year, tournament MVP for the second straight year, finding the back of the net in the 41st minute off a through pass from Jay Encabo to send the Fighting Maroons' third crown since 2006.

"We're lucky to have such a very determined team," said UP coach Aure Gozarden. "We struggled in the first round but had no problems within the team. But we stuck together and we improved as the season went on."

The Fighting Maroons came through with a solid defensive stand all season, giving up just a single goal in 11 matches. It was an different in the final as UP faced UST on the backdrop for long periods.

It was UST's third straight runners-up finish in football.

The loss turned out to be a double blow for UST as the women's squad fell to La Salle, 5-4, in a penalty shootout, losing a winner-take-all showdown for both squads on Sunday at the same venue.

UST found a starting grace in the women's tennis squad, which overcame a home-to-host edge to outplay the rivals on the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Sentinel U also went to basketball finals series while stymied to a deciding game after the Bulldogs prevailed, 5-2, in the men's at the Rizal Memorial ballpark.

Pitcher Aris Dungo stunned for NU in his rental the full route, streaking 14 runs on four. Leading 4-2, NU proved solid to the eighth and ninth innings tallying seven runs, subsets were Game 1, 12-4, leaded the home had failed to cover.

FOOTBALL CHAMPS AGAIN Runners-from-the University of the Philippines (center) celebrate on the podium after receiving their trophy and medals from UAAP president Ricky Palou (front, right) of season-host Ateneo de Manila University.

Top sports images color PSA evening

By Cedrik P. Rapa

THE BEST sports images in 2011 will again be on full display during the Philippine Sportswriters Association Awards Night on Saturday.

The country's oldest media organization has partnered with the Sports Press Photographers Association of the Philippines (SPPAP) in an effort to produce a lively and colorful ceremony at the Manila Hotel.

Members of SPPAP led by founding president Jimmy Ventura, the statistics award-winning lensman, will hold an exhibit during the awards ceremony presented by Smart.

Bulgaria World Boxing Organization (WBO) super bantamweight champion Pronto Donaire Jr. and current world No. 1 billiards player Dennis Orcollo, the two top boxers of the Philippines in boxing, will receive from guest of honor and Vice President Jejomar Binay as well as PSA head Rey Bancoro.

Donaire and Orcollo relieve from the stellar book "Filipino Sports Heroes of the 20th Century," which exposed the finest exponents of Filipino athletes, will be on exhibit.

"We're grateful for the huge endorsement extended to the PSA by our brother photographers as their every little way of making the Annual Awards Night truly meaningful," said Bancoro.

Donaire said the SPPAP "will be giving many copies of the coffee-table book, Filipino Sports Heroes of the 20th Century, which features profiles of the PSA, will also be handed out to members and guests attending the awarding ceremony aired live over dzSR Sports Radio 918.

The awards show is also presented by Coca-Cola, Milo, and the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC).

Also backing the event, which will feature a total of 85 sports personalities and entities, are the Philippine Amateur Basketball Association, Hudson Cotton, JCTSI, and 168 Prime Holdings.

DONAIRE / Boss of 2011

ORCOLLO / Boss of 2011

VARGAS / Boss successor

THE AWARDEES

Athlete of the Year: Jessie ACOB, PSAD For-

PSA Presidential Achievement Award: Jose Ro-

Executive of the Year: Philip Ella

Major Awardees: Alaska Aces (pr. boxing), Air Asia (pr. boxing), Jessie Alday (pr. boxing), Bob Arum, Boy Bagaporo, Bambino Bautista, Ryan Bell, Alvin Benipayo, Jaime Bermudez, Lakan Bisig Sports Foundation, Bobby Boy Bolivar, Jessie Borbon, Bobby Boy Bolivar, Jr. (pr. golf), Eddie Bolzico (pr. golf), Miguel Zubiri (pr. golf), Mayor Lotty Bravo of the East, Sara Lane Lukay, Celso Cruz, Joseph Cua, Rodel Cruzabra, Dionisio Bacolod-Salamillas

National Sports Association of the Year: Jet Sports Sports Confederation of the Philippines (SSCP), Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines (ABAP)

Top Achievers: Elizabeth Tonia Calabroso (for cue Dela Cruz (football), Jhon Rafford Gonzaga, Rachel Anne Gonzaga (athletics), Mercy Rose Gonzalez (pr. golf), Miguel Gonzalez, Jose Paul Gonzalez, Jr. (pr. golf), Miguel Gonzalez (pr. golf), Mayor Lotty Bravo of the East, Sara Lane Lukay, Celso Cruz, Joseph Cua, Rodel Cruzabra, Dionisio Bacolod-Salamillas

Rp. Football: PSA Sesquicentennial Derby Trophy

Special Citation: 200 Southeast Asian gold medalists Jessie Ray Lopez, Jay Rene Bacal, Jessie Lester Lacap, Jake Calalang Salonga, Josephine Rose Sabaliw, Jerry Lucena

Professionals: Rudy Biado, Jerry Bocado, Mario Bocado, Jay Bo Bocaue, Bhadmanathan, Dave Bognot, Jesse Bonifacio, Mike Bonifacio, Ronnie Bolisay, Jerry Boquiren, Rudy Boquiren

18-sport Prisaa sked this season

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PRISAA Schools Athletic Association (Prisaa) will unveil its 50th season on April 15 to 20 in Cebu City with a heavy roster of 18 sports, 10 more than last year's competition program.

Speaking at the annual event in Batangas, Prisaa national executive director Elbert "Bong" Aldana said about 5,000 student-athletes and officials from 500 private schools will gather for the annual games.

Aldana said a conflict with the Philippine Sports Commission's every season reminds of the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex forced the Prisaa to reduce its scheduled events to eight last year.

"Anyway, that's already water under the bridge, and we were able to move on," he said. "What we are looking forward is to see it as a successful and more colorful affair as we can ever since with the assistance to help in identifying fresh sports talents from the country's school populations and develop them to become national athletes."

Last year's competitions were held in Zamboanga City, with the city and provincial government spending P5 million to stage them.

The games, according to Aldana, the games will have basketball competitions in athletics, swimming, boxing, badminton, chess, karate-do, lawn tennis, taekwondo, judo, dancesport and table tennis.

Team competitions are also scheduled in basketball, baseball, beach volleyball, aquatic volleyball, aquatic tekniks, softball and football.

SMC sponsors 6 senior golf tilts

SAN MIGUEL Corp. has teamed its sponsorship of the Federation of Philippine Senior Golfers, Inc. tournaments in 2012.

Retired Gen. Melchor Feliarta, the federation president, said the sponsorship covers six tournaments, starting with Pat Magsaysay Pure Water (PW) tournament to be held at Valley Golf.

Some 100 senior golfers from the federation's 21 chapters are vying in the tournament hosted by the Valley Golf Seniors Association, Inc. Tariff Nine is 67.28 net.

9th Golden Wheel rite to fete Ventura

FRANCISCO Ventura, a lifelong lover in local cycling in the 1960s, was the unanimous choice to join the Golden Wheel Hall of Fame.

an author in the 9th Golden Wheel Awards Night 2011 set March 5 on the Tanglebang hearth Television of the Cultural Center of the Philippines (Ultra).

Finally called Pupulin (Pain in the) Mendez, Ventura proved that being equals victim to not a hindrance to achieving distinction in cycling.

Victim to colorful and significant contributions as a racer and part of an organizing team, brought about a boom in local cycling in the 60s.

Although his fascination for bat-cars started at seventy ago, a dinner encounter with Commodore "Dodo" Aquino sparked his interest in car racing and eventually opened doors to glorious careers in Philippine motorsports history long remembered beyond his time.

A founding member of the Cam Windsor Association, he was part of the Cam Windsors teams that raced in the 1962 Manila Grand Prix won by Dodjie Lauzel. He saw action in the Orgullo Cup, and several fair runs in the Alfa Romeo Clubmen Spyder.

He was also tabbed to get four runs in the 1966's, featuring the Philippine team in the Manila-Hong Kong international meet. Bagabo was also the overall winner of the 1966 Shell Gas Rally, a marathon event that ran for four straight days, together with the cycle of Rudy Lanta, Rosendo Cruz and Eddie Lachica.

Ventura competed in all of the major local and Pan events starting with the first Philippine GP in Cebu City in 1969.

POWELL CUP WINNER Members of the Chiang Kai Shek College squad sulled whatever commemorating their seventh straight title outing versus Ateneo Powell Cup Basketball Tournament. CKSC swept its finals series against Ateneo's Christian School, 85-62 and 74-68. The Blazing Dragons, mentored by Norbert Torres and Michael Mary Chua, also produced the tourney MVP in Mark Reese Nicard and mythical five selection Gregory Lozano and Marc Kalaghat.

Lions, Lady Bulldogs nail Fr. Martin plums

THE DEFENDING champion San Beda Red Lions pulled off a "three-peat" title by Sunday's victory while the National University Lady Bulldogs claimed their first ever women's crown in the 5th Fr. Martin Collegiate Open Cup basketball finals last Saturday.

Jake Pascual banged in a game-high 20 points while Julius Nierras, Boomer Asi Taulava and Ola Adeogun combined for 40 as the Red Lions bounced past the stubborn University of Santo Tomas Tigers, 80-66, in the winner take-all men's finals at the Tiong University of Santo Tomas in Quezon City.

The Lady Bulldogs squandered a 15-point lead but bounced on a triple by Ms. Teresa Pumo to secure a 72-67 triumph over the College of St. Benilde Lady Blazers.

Jessica Tolentino topped the Final Encounter Lady Bulldogs with 19 points, while Erica Adachi added 16 as NU clinched its first women's title.

Pumo pushed the Lady Bulldogs beyond reach in the final minute with a triple and she took a free throw to seal the win.

Closing out is so very hard to do

ANYBODY who has played in a championship series will tell you that the most difficult thing to do is to close out an opponent.

You may be leading the series 2-0 in a best-of-three or 3-1 in a best-of-seven. But there is absolutely no guarantee that you will bring home the title until you nail that victory that closes it out.

Heaven and earth may tell you that nobody in a 3-1 lead in a series is ousted. But it sure doesn't feel that way when you're trying to clinch just one more win to be champion.

You can ask Formula Shell or Devon Rimo to the PBA or even the New York Yankees in Major League Baseball. Ending a series with just one more win is never, ever that easy.

* * *

La Salle and Ateneo come face-to-face with the pressure of closing out a title last week in different UAAP sports.

La Salle's women volleyball team, a juggernaut if there ever was one this season, looked well on its way to rolling over the Lady Eagles in the 8-peak.

Why not, when the Lady Archers had the thrice-to-beat edge for sweeping the season and the advantage of being the most feared offensive and defensive squad.

Insiders felt that it would just be a matter of time before the Taft dynamite would claim the championship. But again the pressure of closing out can rear its ugly head as the game happens point from, and La Salle lost the first match in four sets to Ateneo.

The Loyola six is really testing the nerves of the maturity of its team and reaping the benefits of years of playing together in the UAAP and Shakey's V-League.

Nevertheless, La Salle recovered quickly last Saturday and tossed the tables against Ateneo to four sets as well. The Lady Archers snapped out of the doldrums in the third set to change the momentum of the match.

The women's volleyball finale is now down to a winner take-all showdown this coming week.

* * *

Last Sunday, Ateneo was also ready to celebrate its first-ever baseball crown as friends, family and the school's women's volleyball team, came out to cheer for the Eaglemen squad.

But game National University scored late early and scored four runs in the first four innings to dampen Ateneo's impending party and won, 5-2.

The Loyola squad made three last-ditch efforts in the final three innings but fell short as Ateneo remained down by one.

Ateneo's pitching staff was also down to a bad game showdown this week.

Whether it's in volleyball or baseball or in any sport for that matter, championships are for those who have the mental fortitude to win the number of games needed.

The breaks of the game matters and so does a tad of luck. But winning is for those who want it the most and know how to close it out.

ONE GAME AT A TIME

Sev Sarmenta

NCAA WARS

Red Lions, Lady Blazers rule the roost

By Cedrik F. Tupas

SAN SEBASTIAN stomped Emilio Aguinaldo College, 3-1, Friday to claim another men's football title—even as College of St. Benilde enjoyed supremacy in women's basketball as NCAA Season 87.

La Salle Green Hills remained unscathable in Juniors football, winning its 18th straight crown at the expense of San Beda, 2-0, at the Philsports pitch in Pasig.

The Lady Blazers leaned on a solid performance from Nikki Therese Benavente to blank Emilio Aguinaldo College, 2-0, in the women's badminton finals at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum in Makati.

Benavente, a first year ordinary student, overwhelmed Johanna Rose Aguanta, 21-2, 21-6, to clinch the Most Valuable Player plum.

Coached by Lloyd Ramos with Wilson Pena as his assistant, St. Benilde sealed the championship after Hanine Banda and Bernice Abraham thumped EAC's Hilda Medina and Joyce Castro, 21-15, 21-10.

The San Beda romp was led by Francis Saruschilla, who was named best defender and MVP.

San Beda standout Christopher Pedrosano was also adjudged best midfielder of the tournament.

Manfred Gonzales, a freshman, struck in the 13th minute for LSGH, before Arnon Gelchen, the tournament's best striker, doubled the lead eight minutes from halftime.

Anchoring the LSGH backline, co-captains Joaquin Arnaiz and Eugene De Chaver held their ground, frustrating the Red Cubs, while Most Valuable player Jerone Custodio lit pulled the strings at midfield, before a knee injury sidelined him after halftime.

The win boosted LSGH in prime position to win the NCAA junior general championship, with track and field left to be contested.

The other awardees in the junior division were best goalkeeper Hanlin Bayan Jr. of AntiRizal University, best midfielder Roberto Plopinio of San Beda and top scorer Edmund Mark Villanueva of Perpetual Help.

HERO Servando of St. Benilde shows her ladies singles gold and MVP medals.

PSC buying sports gear from China

By Marc Anthony Reyes

FILIPINO athletes will soon dampen their skills using equipment manufactured in China.

Philippine Sports Commission chair Richie Garcia yesterday said he will fly to China with commissioner Jolly Gomez on March 5 to shop for equipment that will also be used in national competitions like the Palarong Pambansa.

Garcia said priority will be for brands that are of "Olympic quality" or were used in the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

He didn't say though, how much the agency will spend for the equipment.

Last December, the PSC purchased from a Chinese firm the landing pit for pole vault although it took the Bureau of Customs several weeks to release the equipment to the agency.

Garcia said the equipment will be used in the Palarong Pambansa in Laguna, Pangasinan, on May 6 to 11 through the PSC's "equipment-sharing" program.

FRANCISCO "Django" Bustamante sweeps last four racks to prevail.

Calimlim-Wang bags doubles title

DEREN Calimlim teamed up with former billiards queen Dee Wang in the women's doubles title and led the winners in the 2012 Pesta Pura Invitational Badminton Open over the weekend at Powerstroke badminton courts in Makati.

Calimlim and Wang bested national player Gretchen Carmen and Abigail Magno in the finals, 21-15, 22-20, of the four-day event.

In other finals, Team Prima's Jill Sim and Rabie Joyce Chua-eh downed Ralph Cajandig and Ian Espinosa, 21-11, 15-21, 21-9, to bag the men's doubles class E title and May Panuncio and Sheila Pascual dominated Deanne Almagro and Angeline Avenilla, 22-20, 21-19, for the women's doubles B crown.

Marian Cayabyab and Sylvia De Vera beat Beverly Fabila and Rona Dayao, 21-18, 21-13, to take the women's doubles class C crown, while Myra Francisco and Micah Gonzales outlasted Claire Chua and Thelen Lacson, 23-21, 21-15, to cop the women's doubles class D.

FORMER Asian duathlon champion Ryan Mendoza stayed in the forefront of that sport as the 35-year-old racer sailed the Pocari Sweat Duathlon yesterday at the Bonifacio Global City in Taguig.

Stalking on his pet bike event, Mendoza captured the elite men's crown by clocking 1 hour, 31 minutes and 21 seconds in the 40K run-30K bike-4K run event.

Another veteran who topped the women's side at 40-year-old Dorip Ella demolished with a 1:52:41 clocking to emerge as the only female athlete to beat the two-hour psychological barrier.

Topping the team division were John Red Cuba and Ryan Salcedo who fired 1:42:41 in the race that drew 220 entries.

Tim Berberabe, Cyrille Cruzat in the bike leg," said Mendoza, who posted the best splits of 21:40, 54:16 and 15:25 minutes.

Mendoza, the Philippine Air Force soldier-athlete who also topped the 42k Subic International Marathon last month, said it paid to stay in competition shape always.

"That's why I weren't surprised with my morning performance," Mendoza added in Filipino.

Team Angelo Gonzaga finished second overall with a 1:55:38 clocking, also the best time posted in the 30-34 age group.

Other age group winners include Mervin Santiago (1:38:41), Michael Raymundo (1:38:55), Adam Sisnieta (1:39:55), Mark Elle (1:42:43), Rony Pantoncan (1:51:04), Jose Trinidad (1:42:21), Wayne Doming (1:38:00), Fiona Leanne Wahoo (2:05:23) and Ralph Ibanez (2:04:35).

Pocari Sweat sales and marketing manager Brandon Miranda presided over the awarding ceremony of the event organized by Rhe Ring.

Nine more Rhe Ring races are lined up this year including the Tri United and Rhe United Swims and the Three 22s Bobol Triathlon.

Jennifer B. Ayco

FIESTA! Wild Ryan Mendoza

Mendoza rules Pocari duathlon

Where did the money for NSAs go?

CLEAN LIVING

Manuel P. Iñigo

THE INCF that the government is widely accepted as the main source of funding in the promotion and development of sports in a developing country like ours, it does not follow that those in charge of this duty responsibility in this area the National Sports Associations, should get the license to spend the peoples' money foolishly.

I was therefore appalled to read the report by PSA spokesman Jane Nicanor that a "58 NSAs have a combined P130.6 million in unliquidated cash advances that the government should collect." The agency's Philippine Sports Commission is asking them to settle immediately.

Out of these 58 national sports bodies, 39 of them are regular members of the Philippine Olympic Committee headed by former Subic Bay "Mayor" Edgardo J. Angara.

"Will these NSAs pay up the money they owed the PSC?" talked one hotshot track and field president Go Teng Kok, whose athletes association is set to settle (or has already settled?) the unliquidated P6.5 monetary support it got from the PSC.

Added Go: "If they don't pay back, the PSC needs to file a case against them. But please help these athlete obligations with the PSC with their training and international commitments."

PSC chair Richie Garcia said the agency is still awaiting a comprehensive report from the PSC's accounting department to identify the NSAs which failed to justify their cash advances through receipts and

(P9,030,000), chess (P8,034,960), chess/kiteflying (P5,034,960), chess (P9,030,130), volleyball (P9,177,000), football/futsal (P9,014,591), karatedo (P4,983,921), wrestling (P9,927,200), weightlifting (P9,915,965), rugby (P3,506,144), sailing (P3,279,205), table tennis (P9,006,605), pencak silat (P9,993,300) and windsurfing (P9,178,926).

* * *

My late esteemed and valued friend, sportsman-businessman Eugenio J. Perez, first president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines, left the Abap with a lasting legacy for all to left the country's finest basketball sport in the Olympics with no obligations whatsoever.

During his term, Tito Genio, as he was also popularly known, left the Abap with savings of P432,548.65. The next successful NBA president in recent memory, Perez produced the Philippines' first Olympic silver medal winner during the Tokyo Games in 1964 when featherweight Anthony Villanueva lost a "sure gold" in Hawaii's Stadium Stepadium, losing 3-2 in duo-finals.

The Genio was a workaholic, attending to his duty sickness fail, leaving his business in Manila for days or weeks and traveling abroad or to the provinces with his staff at his own expense. He served as Abap president from 1963 until 1973.

Born on Dec. 22, 1918, Tito Genio died on May 20, 1980 at age 64.

NCR reasserts supremacy in 20th SCUAA Olympics

MUNTINLUPA Capital Region regained the overall championship crown at the close of the 2012 National SCUAA (State Colleges and Universities) Olympics yesterday at the Ilaya Sports Complex in Alabang.

Flaunting their might in nearly all sports, the Big City here finished with 114 gold medals on top of 83 silvers and 59 bronzes in the week-long competition among top student athletes from the country's state colleges and universities.

Host Region 4-A (Western Visayas) finished a distant second overall with a gold-silver-bronze medal tally of 46-37-33, while Region 3 (Central Luzon) rounded up third with a 32-30-38 haul.

Region 6 ruled men's football, beating NCR and Cordillera Autonomous Region. The West Visayans also seized the gold in men's basketball with Region 7 playing second and NCR third.

The women's basketball gold, however, went to NCR. Region 6 and CAR pocketed the silver and bronze medals, respectively.

NCR swept the gold medals in men's and women's volleyball and also prevailed in men's tennis, men's table tennis, women's beach volleyball and women's softball.

Region 3 topped women's tennis and women's table tennis while Region 4 and Region 5 dominated men's and women's badminton, respectively.

NCR swept all eight gold medals at stake in men's and women's chess and all eight in dancesports events.

In boxing, Region 6 captured four of the six gold medals at stake. Region 4 and Region 12 won one gold medal each.

More than 3,000 delegates and officials from the 111 SUCs all over the country took part in the multisport event hosted by the Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (Pasuc) Region VI.

The event was hosted by Dr. Hilda E. Ledesma, president of the West Visayas State University; Dr. Ronny Delfino, president of Carlos Hilado Memorial State College, and Dr. Lito Sorolla, president of West Visayas College of Science and Technology.

Final medal tally	G	S	B
NCR	114	83	59
Region 6	46	37	33
Region 3	32	30	38
Region 4	25	32	32
Region 5	7	6	9
Region 7	6	5	6
Region 8	4	3	5
Region 10	3	6	14
Region 12	3	4	4
CARAGA	3	3	1
CAR	3	1	1
Region 2	2	1	4
Region 1	1	5	7
Region 9	1	3	7
Region 11	1	0	7
ARMM	0	1	0
Region 13	0	1	0
CARAGA	0	0	1

LGBA Open Invt'l 5-cocker gets under way today at PCC

TOP: (L-R) Contacts prospects for top honors starting at 12 noon today in the Open Commercial Brokers Association (LGBA) Open Invitational 5-Cock Derby at the Pasay City Cockpit.

Among those joining action today are 2012 Baloi Shadow Cup champ Larry Bituconan, 2011 Breeder of the Year Allan Chan, Gary Ramos, Arman Santos, Nino Serrano, Pelo Lorenzo, Sherlyn Calpongco, LGBA president Rose Pua, Eric Dy, Edwin Angco, Jun Sevilla, Honey Yu, Hiro Antonio, Lit Candelaria, Gerry Locsin, Jun Tang, Celso Evangelista and Poul Garcia.

Meanwhile, the LGBA's dog screening and weighbanding will run from March 1 to 31.

SPORTS

UTAH'S Jeremy Evans jumps over teammate Gordon Hayward (not in photo) diving on a shot in the slam dunk contest.

Evans, Love steal show in All-Star side events

ORLANDO, Florida—Utah's Jeremy Evans won the Slam Dunk Contest at the NBA's All-Star Saturday night festivities.

Evans, who got into the competition as a replacement for injured New York guard Iman Shumpert, earned 29 perfect of 3 million text message votes cast by fans.

This was the first year that fans had any say in control of scoring, a marked break from past competitions.

Evans earned the edge over Houston's Chase Budinger, Indiana's Paul George and Dallas' Jameer Nelson's Derrick Williams.

Evans dunked with a camera on his head, dunked two basketballs while jumping over a seated spectator and then dunked a Kid Mulone jersey while dunking over stuntman-dressed comedian Kevin Hart.

This year's contest heard three rounds, but the time participants had only two minutes per round to complete a single dunk.

In the Three-point Shootout contest, Minnesota forward Kevin Love was consistent throughout, but had to survive a tiebreaker in the first round and sweet-ten the last few shots from Oklahoma City's Kevin Durant to pull out the 17-16 victory in the final.

Love tied for third in Round 1 with 16, along with Miami's Mario Chalmers, but beat him 5-4 in a tiebreaker.

Defending champion James Jones led all shooters in the opening round with 22 and Durant was next with 20.

Orlando's Ryan Anderson just missed eliminating both Love and Chalmers, totaling 17 after missing his final 3-point shot.

Love and Durant both had 16 in Round 2 to advance to the finals, with Jones scoring 12.

San Antonio point guard Tony Parker also prevailed in the Skills Competition.

Parker won the only one of six participants to break 30 seconds to the first round (29.2) and this time of 32.8 in the final run on the obstacle course was better than Boston's Rajon Rondo (34.6) and New Jersey's Deron Williams (41.6).

Williams won the competition in 2008, which involves participants maneuvering through a dribbling circle, successfully throwing chest passes through a hanging tire and driving for a layup. AP

LOVE

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McIlroy, Westwood forge duel

MARBELLA, Antonio—Rory McIlroy and Lee Westwood set up a mouth-watering duel in the last four of the WGC Accenture Match Play Championship when they each completed comfortable victories in Saturday's quarterfinals.

Northern Ireland's world number two McIlroy never trailed beating Australia's Jason Day 3&2 while third-ranked Westwood won 4&2 against fellow Briton Martin Laird at Dove Mountain's Ritz-Carlton Golf Club.

Either McIlroy or Westwood can depose Luke Donald as world number one by winning Sunday's final, adding extra spice to a mini-semifinal encounter on Sunday morning.

"This is why we practice, this is why we work so hard," McIlroy told reporters after crushing his first Match Play semifinal in four appearances. "I've been to try to learn the best.

"I'll really enjoy out there tomorrow morning battling away and ob-

MCILROY

WESTWOOD

viously trying to beat Lee. It's the match that most people wanted and definitely the match that I wanted."

Earlier, Hunter Mahan crushed fellow American Matt Kuchar 6&5 in their quarterfinal and will meet compatriot Brandt Wilson, a 4&3 winner over Danish Peter Hanson.

McIlroy, at 22 aiming to become the youngest ever Match Play champion, piled up six birdies to keep continual pressure on Bae, who had ousted 2010 winner Ian Poulter and Masters champion Charl Schwartzel in earlier rounds.

"I don't think Mom's had his best with him today," McIlroy said after a breezy, rain-spattered day at Dove Mountain. "I felt like I played pretty well. I played solid golf and did what I had to do. I'm just very happy to be through."

Westwood, who had never reached the third round in his 11 previous appearances at the event, was delighted to be in contention for one of the game's biggest titles. "My priorities this year were to win major championships and World Golf Championships because I haven't ever won any," the 38-year-old Englishman said. Reuters

Radwanska bags Dubai title, No. 5 rank

DUBAI—Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland won her eighth career WTA title on Saturday, defeating Julia Georges of Germany, 7-5, 6-4, in the Dubai Tennis Championships final.

Radwanska will rise one place to a career-best No. 5 when the world rankings are updated on Monday.

The fifth-seeded Radwanska led in both sets but it took her almost two hours to overcome the unseeded Georges, who started defending champion Caroline Wozniacki the day before.

The German rallied on her powerful forehand, but Radwanska patiently remained on the baseline to watch Georges' unsuccessful forays to the net, rushed shots and long and wide returns.

Radwanska was close to victory in the second set with a 4-1 lead but her German opponent won three games before Radwanska wrapped up her second win over Georges in a month.

"Her forehand, it's a very big weapon," Radwanska said. "It's just going in fast and sometimes, you know, I couldn't even like move the right way and the ball was already behind me."

AGNIESZKA Radwanska hits a return to Julia Georges.

Georges was hoping to make up for the loss to Radwanska in the fourth round of last month's Australian Open.

"I'm not disappointed because it (my tournament) was a big step in the right direction for me," Georges said. "She's a top five player. I don't think that I did so many things wrong."

Radwanska improved her record to 15-5 on the year, all three losses to only top-ranked Victoria Azarenka. Azarenka pulled out of Dubai due to an ankle injury.

"Well, you know, yeah, I'm 5, but it's still far from being No. 1," Radwanska said. "Looks pretty close, but it's still far." AP

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Kenyan upstages Gebrselassie

TOKYO—Wilkister Njoroge of Kenya surged ahead of Haile Gebrselassie with four kilometers left on Sunday to win the Tokyo Marathon by two brief seconds ahead of Gebrselassie.

Gebrselassie raced his last after 38 kilometers and Njoroge pulled at the 39th mark and crossed the finish line in 2 hours, 7 minutes, 37 seconds.

"I thought I could hang back for a bit but changed my mind and pushed because there were other runners coming from behind," Njoroge said.

Gebrselassie, who finished fourth at 2:08:17, was aiming to secure a place on the Ethiopian team for the London Olympics but could not finish in his usual 2:04 to boost his chances. AP

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25 firms vie for 15 oil, gas areas

Gov't agency sees $7.5B in initial investments

By Amy R. Remo

AT LEAST 25 local and foreign petroleum exploration companies have firmed up their interest in acquiring the 15 oil and gas blocks being offered by the Aquino administration under the Philippine Energy Contracting Round 4 with the submission of documents prequalifying them to the bidding.

Energy Undersecretary Jose Layug Jr. identified the major players as French multinational Total, one of the world's leading oil and gas groups; Eni S.p.A., an Italian multinational oil and gas company that is present in 79 countries; American firm Cobalt, engaged in exploration and production of energy from diversified fuel sources like geothermal, natural gas and hydroelectric; and GDF Suez of France, which is currently the No. 1 independent power producer in the world and the top importer of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and supplier of energy and environmental efficiency services in Europe.

The other companies that submitted prequalification documents, according to Layug, were Shell Philippines Exploration BV (SPEX), NorAsian Energy Ltd., Australian firm Nido Petroleum Corp., Malaysia's Hibiscus Energy Ltd., Australian firm Top Oil Ltd., Mitsuya Corp. Ltd., Philex Petroleum Plc. and Enex, a subsidiary of oil giant Exxon Mobil Corp.

Based on the initial list as of

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
Feb. 24, 2012
42.840

STOCK MARKET
Feb. 24, 2012
0.48

Stocks seen to weaken

THE LOCAL stock market is seen taking a breather this week after surging close to—but falling to break out of—the 5,000 level last week.

Investors are more likely to look up gains from blue chips, pushing downward pressure on this index.

When Philippine Stock Exchange index, but there will still likely be some declines in some sectors/groups, according to Philippine Equities Investment Strategist Nina Claudio.

Last week, the PSEi hit a new

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Economy seen heading toward high growth path

By Doris C. Dumlao

CLSA study sees start of private investment cycle

THE PHILIPPINES is undergoing a renaissance that looks all set to bring the economy to a higher trend growth and power stocks to new heights, according to regional investment house CLSA Asia-Pacific.

In a research titled "The Eagle Flies Again" dated Feb. 20, the CLSA report written by analyst Eduardo Cho said that like the ever-submerged Philippine eagle, a private sector investment cycle was a rare sighting in the country. But now, it said the country was on the cusp of yet another investment cycle for the first time in 15 years driven by political stability, rising business confidence, low interest rates, robust balance sheet and the country's long-term demographic potentials.

"The Philippines soon like no other region," the research said, adding, however, that this time around, there was hope that the nascent recovery would not be as challenged as that seen earlier.

After years of false starts and missed opportunity, there was a real sense of optimism building in the business community, the research said, suggesting the time was right for the Philippines to shed the stigma of being the "sick man of Asia." Beyond the huge remittances from overseas Filipinos, CLSA said the country could now count on other major growth drivers.

"The transformation continues for Asia's once most promising. The service sector continues to grow off the BPO (business process outsourcing) segment underpinning rising employment and per capita spend. Tourism and property are other drivers," the research said.

Still known globally for the Philippines' quality service sector, CLSA said the BPO sector would likely see its industry revenue doubling to $25 billion by 2016. The employment opportunities will keep more locals at home while per capita income should improve and the middle class continue to grow, the research said.

The country's middle class was growing at 9.5 percent a year until 2030 could well supersize fifth of the Philippines' population, the research said.

"We see the country's middle class to add nominal, especially in terms early as investment flow turns their strategy in fund markets and have yet to invest in equities in a big way," it said.

CLSA recommend that the key investment cycle in the Philippines took place in the early 1990s under President Ramos, when foreign fund the telecom and banking sectors which consolidated and the foundations for the growth and development of the BPO industry over the past decade.

In the past 12 years, the country grew dismally, gradual growth averaged 4.5% percent with population growth of 2.0 percent in the past 10 years. GDA said trend GDP growth should be higher starting 2013.

The country's economic growth has lagged its regional peers. But, without much fanfare, the economy has transformed itself into an emerging services economy, laying the foundations for its (the) growth," it said.

What all these meant for stock market investors, CLSA said, was that old reliable names and upcoming companies would be the ones investors should own. By sector, it said conglomerates, banks, construction and infrastructure companies could likely outperform.

CLSA has recommended a "conviction buy" on Ayala Corp., Metro Pacific Investments Corp., Cebu Air, Philippine National Bank, Security Bank and Robinsons Land Corp.

For specific infrastructure play, CLSA also has "buy" ratings on construction firms Megaworld Corp. and SM Corp. and a buy rating on telecommunications.

Bombers Global City was rated as a "microcosm" of the changes about in the broader economy. "Fifteen years ago, it was a military camp, more farmers for the mere mention of bars, Bonifacio Triangle Today, it is home to high-rise, luxury residential towers and upmarket shopping centers, rising the boundaries for to (the) growth," it said.

The CLSA report also noted that real income growth has an all-time high of 3.9 million in 2011 and was forecast to grow at double-digit rates over the next few years, eventually hitting more than eight million by 2015. The number of dummy employs 3.7 million people and tourism weights accounts for 2 percent of GDP.

25 firms vie for 15 oil, gas areas

From page B1

last Friday, the most notable host firms that submitted the requirements were InterEnergy Resources Corp., PEOC Exploration Corp., Monte Oro Resources and Petex Petroleum, which is owned by businessman Manuel V. Pangilinan's Philex Mining Corp.

Other companies that submitted their respective prequalification documents were Golden Dragon, Energy, BPG Energy Corporation Energy Planet Gas, Forum Nordic, Southeastern Pte. Ltd., Mindoro Gas, Inter-national Energy Corp. and Bitumen Energy Corp.

Layug said they expected more companies to seek prequalifications as the PEOC it said after deadline of submission this Wednesday (Feb. 29). Once these companies have been found to be qualified to join the bidding, they will be given between April and July this year to submit actual bid proposals for the areas of their choice.

In June last year, the Department of Energy launched the PEOC it for petroleum, during which it offered 15 prospective oil and gas blocks in Cagayan, Central Luzon, Northwest Palawan, Mindoro Cuyo, East Palawan, Common and the Sulu Sea.

Stocks seen to weaken

From page B1

intra-day high of 4,997.04, but closed at 4,990. It was only slightly higher compared to 4,980.71 the previous week.

In the past two days, Chaulk-owned that profit-taking was prevalent while foreign buying was slowing down. "Also, there's some consolidation in the US market as there will likely be some corrections. But there's still a strong possibility of a strong play in secondary stocks after the run in blue chips."

Meanwhile, he said 5,000 might be difficult to break for now in technical analysis, he said a round number will mean news was usually psychologically difficult to pass.

Although the fourth-quarter corporate reporting was not yet over, based on what has been reported, Chaulk said there has not been too many surprises. "This is what happened in the past couple of days—good market opening then will all toward the end of session. This symptomatic of a correction," he said.

Doris C. Dumlao

Mining face off

THE MOTIVES of all debates (and ad many) however done he and against mining will culminate this week during a face-off between industry leaders on March 2. Friday his less than Manuel V. Pangilinan, chair of the country's largest mining firm Philex Mining and chief of the First Pacific group of Hong Kong, will face feisty environmentalist Gina Lopez, the head of ABS-CBN Foundation, to a much-awaited forum. The said duelists all the press and rests of mining. There is ultimately a battle for the core of President Aquino, who is now in the midst of approving a mining policy framework.

To say that such a balancing act is difficult is an understatement. There are certainly those dead executive orders circulating in town and currently making miners and investors jittery.

"We're confident that it will be resolved equitably," says Mike Toledo, the top mineral of Philex Mining, chief of corporate affairs and government relations. He added that Philex was "very flexible" with concerns on revenue sharing or profit sharing with the government and was hoping that the economics of the mining industry would be factored in in the upcoming EO.

Asked about the prospective merger and acquisition (M&A) deals on Philex's table, Toledo said the company was indeed on the expansion mode and looking at opportunities and that such expansion would be "financed" since the country's mining policy is clarified. Philex is also keen on exploring offshore opportunities like Papua and Indonesia.

Back to the mining face-off, details on the much-awaited forum have not been finalized but given the media affiliation of the MVP and Lopezes, expect ample or even live coverage by the Kapamilya and Kapuso networks.

Boots C. Donato

No to mining, no to debates

NOW about that mining sector debate, it is really an effort to bring out the pros and cons of the mining industry to the fore — or so the usual stuff chorus — organized by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The news was set to feature Chamber of Mines stalwarts Philip Simmonds and Jimmy Bautista and Nickel Asia's Antonio Guiterrez consultant Peter Wallace for the pro-mining panel. The anti-mining panel would have been composed of activists and environmentalists Gina Lopez and Christian Monsod, as well as Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn.

All debaters have confirmed their attendance and everyone was excited to hear the views of both sides.

Unfortunately, Bautista had to bail out on the last minute after his father, former Ambassador Sidney Bautista, passed away last week. (The younger Bautista is said to be considering some kind of public civil career going forward. Anyone?)

Because of this, the pro-mining camp enlisted Lyceum Rhamy Pangilinan—the chair of the country's biggest miner, Philex Mining Corp.—who gamely agreed to take Bautista's place.

Lo and behold! Mayor Hagedorn suddenly backed out, with one of his functionaries stating word is some opponents that the Palawan politico suddenly remembered that he had a prior commitment. Then... Monsod also backed out for self-explanatory reasons.

It is now unclear if the debate would still push through, given the high-powered personalities assembled on the pro-mining side having a solitary Gina Lopez on the other.

Of course, being trounced in a debate is not a problem for the anti-mining group ... since they've been known to focus emotional appeals to the broader public anyway.

Marites L. Lanao

Sizzling PSE

NOT only is the PSE index enjoying new heights but trading in shares of the deconsolidated Philippine Stock Exchange itself turned extraordinary last week as share prices soared in heavy volume.

Stocks of the deconsolidated local bourse surged by P1.58-fil-or 52 percent last week alone to close at P60.0on Friday. An interday high of P6.00 a share was twice hit during the week. For a long time until this month, PSE shares have been locked at less than P2.50.

Dealers said it started as a dividend play, as the case was in previous years, and is specially true for this year given that the robust capital numbers would likely result in higher earnings for the PSE. Some dealers also may also have something to do with share accumulation ahead of the 2012 annual elections, but the latest buzz is that some local guys are heavily loading up on PSE shares.

Could there be some mergers and acquisitions play as well given the consolidation trend among major bourses around the world? Some analysts think so. There's also the potential merger with the listed securities exchange Philippine Clearing and Exchange Corp., but some say any potential gain from such a course alone won't justify the rate at which PSE shares surged last week.

One dealer said this run-up started shortly after the bourse's first Exchange Commissioner required a more prompt reporting of buying on PSE shares. Instead of brokers having guesstimated 4 p.m. the next day to report purchases of PSE shares, they are now required to submit the BIR used it on the next day to whoever is accumulating the PSE shares recently, the SEC must have some idea. *Boots C. Donato*

Notary Foundation vs BIR

THE NOTARY Public Foundation Inc. (NBCFI) director Frank Chavez said eight of the alleged 14 respondents in the BIR case cut out evasion instead that the BIR's case against them was premature and baseless.

The case stems from a piece of real estate donated to the foundation many years ago, which it has been collecting real rent on. Instead of being exempt from donor's tax, the BIR is claiming that the NBCFI owes around P1 billion in taxes, value-added tax, withholding tax, 12 items on income tax, withholding tax, 13 items on withholding/beneficiary papers, and books of accounts.

Two days later, the BIR—"in obvious bad faith and malice and in clear violation of due process"—announced that it filed the case.

"This is most unfair to NBCFI and the institutional respondents," Chavez added. "During the investigation before any hearing, my clients will establish the businesses of the BIR corruption. They will prove that they are tax compliant and continue to serve the bar, fortunate to cut costs through their humanitarian, charitable, educational and social programs."

NBCFI, a not-stock, non-profit corporation, also laments that the BIC acted prematurely and with inordinate haste not only in filing the charge but in releasing a press statement, which has damaged the reputations of NBCFI and respected businessmen who sponsor altruistic activities in pursuit of lofty goals and principles. "Evidently made money here," Chavez asserted the BIR and the public. *Ramon L. Lanao*

Got business shots and a preview of the Buzz site evening before it comes out. Text 09.09 PM BOSS BIZZ to 4467 (PLDT subs).

First Laguna Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Lumban, Laguna
Tel. Nos. (049) 541-6470 / Telefax (049) 541-6469
E-mail Address: flecoi_1971@yahoo.com

INVITATION TO BID

The First Laguna Electric Cooperative, Inc. with the address at Brgy. Luyos, Lumban, Laguna, invites all qualified bidders to bid for its material and labor requirements intended for the construction of Brgy. Pinagsibaan Primary and Secondary Line for the following projects:

Site / Materials	Unit Cost		
	Labor	Material	Total
LOT 1			
One Set Line Rigs, Reinforcing Steels	1,800	12,500	14,300
One Roll Line Wire, Steel Pins for Tangent	2,000	13,000	15,000
LOT 2			
One Set Line Rigs, Reinforcing Steels	1,800	12,500	14,300
One Set Insulator Rigs, Steel Pins for Tangent	1,700	11,000	12,700
LOT 3			
One Set Line Rigs, Reinforcing Steels	2,000	13,000	15,000
One Set Insulator Rigs, Steel Pins for Tangent	1,700	11,000	12,700
LOT 4			
One Set Line Rigs, Reinforcing Steels	2,000	13,000	15,000
One Set Insulator Rigs, Steel Pins for Tangent	1,700	11,000	12,700

All interested parties are invited to purchase bidding documents from FLECO Cashier's office starting February 20, 2012 after payment of a non-refundable fee of Three Thousand Pesos (Php 3,000.00). The duly filled bid documents must be submitted on March 12, 2012 (Monday) starting at 9:00AM at FLECO Main Office, Brgy. Luyos, Lumban, Laguna.

Proponent further to include in your tender undersigned the delivery date, terms of payment and availability of stocks for immediate purchase. The FLECO Board of Directors reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any of the requirements formality therein and accept bids most desirable and advantageous to the cooperative.

(Sgd.) **MELVIN C. KAMANGA**
PBAC CHAIRMAN
(02-26-12 & 02-27-12)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

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GENERAL INSTRUMENTS

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Learning for the Future: An Open Space Technology Conference

ON MARCH 27-30, 2012, SEAMEO INNOTECH and the People Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) are co-convening Learning for the Future: An Open Space Technology Conference. The conference, primary of two stand-alone segments, a one-day introduction to Open Space Technology (March 27 hosted by PMAP at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Ortigas, Mandaluyong City) and a two-and-a-half-day workshop (March 28-30, hosted by SEAMEO INNOTECH at its campus along Commonwealth Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City). SEAMEO INNOTECH is inviting everyone to a deep conversation about learning and all the many ways that primary learners can be enhanced for the progress of here. Education systems is just but one element; there are multiple and equally important players – businesses, civil society organizations, private individuals, families and neighbors – that must take part to this critical conversation as every person matters and as a changing world and live fullies more meaningful, and productive lives. Everybody has a part to play. And to be fully effective, all parts need to support and complement the others. For this reason, SEAMEO INNOTECH invites everyone to come and perfect his/her own role in the conspiracy of peers, colleagues, and soon-to-be friends from all over Asia!

In this conference, we are all teachers and all learners. We will have the opportunity and responsibility to take any issue that we really care about. We need not have the answer or be the expert, and truthfully, be the important issues, there are few answers and no experts. We are all in this together – as members and learners. For most of our time we will be working in Open Space, a simply approach to conferencing in which we the participants set the agenda and conduct the meeting, time thousands of times all over the world. Open Space ensures that real issues will be addressed if you are to join them on the table.

Harrison Owen, the originator of Open Space, will be with us. On the first day of the Conference he will set the stage and set the pace – taking many more questions than answers. He will make very presentations followed by maximum time for small group discussions and dialogues. And then it will be off to the main event of the Conference – one and a half days in Open Space – with everyone co-creating the agenda and running the meeting.

And the results? At the very least, every single issue of major concern to anybody will be on the table. All issues will have ample time to be discussed with written reports summarizing the conversations and conclusions. In short we are going to write a book on the Future of Learning, which will be published by the time we go home. In that all, you may ask? Who knows? But what you have a group of bright and dedicated people working with issues they passionately care about, it is more than likely that alliances will be formed, and with the books, actions emerged.

Join us! Take part in shaping the world of Learning for the Future.

For more information, contact Michelle Sanchez at 924-0987 to 94 loc. 387 or email at mmsa@seameo.innotech.org or visit www.seameo.innotech.org

ANR Unlimited awarded as one of the Top 50 Coops

The Cooperative Development Authority Manila Extension Office in collaboration with the Regional Cooperative Development Council-National Capital Region recognized ANR Unlimited as one of the Top 50 Cooperatives as an Effective and Efficient Business Enterprise in Terms of Total Assets during the 5th National Capital Region Search for Outstanding Cooperatives last December 21, 2011 at Imperial Palace Suites, Quezon City in concurrence with the kick-off event in celebration of the 2012 International Year of Cooperatives as proclaimed by the United Nations last December, the Certificate of Recognition was awarded by Mayor Jejomar Erwin S. Binay, Jr. and accepted by Irma Lilia, ANR Operations and Thomas A. Bautista, HR & Admin Services Manager of ANR Unlimited during the Manila Cooperative Development Officers' meeting/ceremony last January 9, 2012.

SAMOTOUCH Pink, the exclusive distributor of SAMO Pink "Healthy Coffee" is gearing up for its forthcoming 4th anniversary this March 17. A "Pre-Anniversary Mega-sayle" following pre-together was recently held for all its leaders, members and stockists. Highlight of the celebration was the recognition for their Ambassador Crown Diamond Director (ACDD) who garnered the highest points in volume sales and has a three-leg Crown Diamond Director position in all levels. Shown in photo are SAMOTOUCH Pink top officials: 4) Marivic Sandoval, HR and Training Manager; Rina Sollango, Assistant Marketing Manager; Kristy Almario, vice president for National Relations; Mrs. Sergio A. Rodriguez, Manila Coronna (with bouquet); new ACDD & Sergio's daughter Lou Soberon; EVP and Dan Vargas, Area Manager. Kaos Touch healthy coffee is made out of the King of Herbs (red mushroom) grown in the world's largest organic plantation of Ganoderma Lucidum in Alor Setar, Malaysia. Visit website at: www.ganotouch.com and www.ganoworld-malaysia.com; or at telephone nos.: (02) 706-1115, 706-1131.

Philippine internet congress and expo - the great convergence

THE PHILIPPINE INTERNET congress and Expo, a landmark event in the Philippines, will be held on March 9-11 at Shangrila Hall. Highlighting the latest trends and updates, the great convergence will feature some of the celebrated personalities in social media, e-commerce, internet marketing, internet security and other relevant fields. Discover ways you can dramatically improve your business productivity.

It will feature illustrious speakers and today's trendsetters in Philippine Internet like Jack Madrid, Country Manager for the Philippines of Multiply.com,

Monty Hernando, president of DIMAP and MegaMobile, Steph Dawson, Asiatrax vice president for Sales/Officer, Jim Ayson, Internet Manager for Partner Management of GMAIL Janet Toral, Founder of Philippine Internet Community Society and digitalFilipino, Hans Montenegro, Country Manager for Southeast Asia, AV Rubio, Editor in Chief of Inquirer.net, Pluto Mon Lizardo, Hemel Navarra, Tito Martinez, Glenn Glazer, Lloyd Luna, Joel Cagampang and other internet luminaries.

Highlights of the topics are: Social Media Marketing; The Future of e-Commerce; Bringing Your Dream Business to Life; The Facebook Generation; The Impact of Social Media to Global Transformation; Protecting Your Business; What You Should Know About Hacking; Online Reputation Management; Internet Recruitment; From Entrepreneur to Technopreneur (Growing Revenue Streams from Your Site); Survival of the Fittest in the Internet Age; Building Community Through Blogging; The Mobile Apps Experience; 8 Philippine Perspective: Online News and Information; Services Through e-Government; Expanding Corporate Social Responsibility Through Internet; IP solutions for your Business (Cloud, Storage, Data Management & Protection, Video Intelligence, IP Telephony, Firewall); and other relevant topics.

This landmark event is organized by Information Consulting Group, in cooperation with PLDT, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Multiply.com, Jobstreet, Agentsmind, ourGLOBE, Advertising Associates, newsmall.com, mingpod.com, TipidPC.com, TipidXtras, The Radio Partners, Jam 88.3, Wave 89.1, Magic 89.9, 99.5FL, 103.5 StarFM, Inquirer.net, Lloydluna.com, Glenmor Press. There are still a few slots available for sponsors and exhibitors. Please call or text for inquiries and reservations, please call Faye or Sandrell at 470-1816, 470-3057 or 0905-3064980 or you may visit www.powermanph.com.

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OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory on the 1st Death Anniversary of our dearest "Papang"

DOMINADOR B. JACOB

who peacefully joined our Lord on February 27, 2011.

Holy Mass will be offered on February 27, 2012, 8:00 a.m. at his resting place, Loyola Memorial Park, Parañaque City.

In Loving Memory on the Eighteenth Death Anniversary of

JOVENCIO L. VALEÑA

18 years since you found your resting place, and that's where we want to go.

To once again see your face and have a life embrace.

Daddy, you are gone too long, but, in our memories
You forever live on.

Mommy, children and grandchildren.

ALBAY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

BID	Technical Service Requirements	ABC (Php)	Bid Security Per Zone
1	Supply, installation, commissioning including all accessories and civil works for Steel Pole 12M Circuit Breaker Tie-on Level at Pinagbuhatan, Legazpi City, as primary protection for the 20 MVA Power Transformer	1,800,000.00	1,800.00

BID	Disposal of Non-Performing Assets	ABC (Php)	Bid Security Per Zone
1	Disposal of assorted inventories, posted vehicle, scrap metals, office furniture and fixtures, equipment and others	1,000,000.00	1,000.00

Schedule are listed as follows:

A. For SPS Circuit Breaker
1. Issuance of Bid Docs — Starting February 28, 2012
2. Pre-Bid Conference — March 5, 2012, 9:00 a.m. ALECO Board Hall, Main Office
3. Deadline of Submission and Opening of Bids — March 19, 2012, 2:00 p.m. ALECO Board Hall, Main Office

B. For Disposal of Non-Performing Assets
1. Issuance of Bid Docs — Starting February 28, 2012
2. Pre-Bid Conference — March 5, 2012, 9:00 a.m. ALECO Board Hall, Main Office
3. Deadline of Submission and Opening of Bids — March 19, 2012, 2:00 p.m. ALECO Board Hall, Main Office
4. Site Inspection Schedule — March 12, 2012 (right after the Pre-Bid Conference)

The complete set of Bidding Documents can be obtained at ALECO PBAC Secretary, Albay Electric Cooperative, Inc. upon payment in the Bidding Documents.

The ALECO BAC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein or to accept the most advantageous to the government. ALECO BAC likewise reserves the right to reject any bid/s found to be non-responsive to the requirements of the Bidding Documents.

ALBAY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
PBAC Secretariat
Rawis, Legazpi City
Tel. No. (052) 820-4777, Fax No. (052) 481-0908
http://www.aleco.com.ph

(Sgd.) **ENGR. MELCHOR V. AGUAS**
PBAC Chairman

BAC Res. No. 6-11-2012

Request for Interested Parties for Gas Station Operator in GGLC

Project Location

Located within Clark Freeport Zone, 170 hectares known as Global Gateway Logistics City, Spur Road 2, Industrial Grade 1, Clark Freeport Zone, Pampanga, Philippines 2023.

Project Name

Gas Plaza – Gas Station Operator

Project Description

GGLC is the country's first farmers-public located on the main international ports in Clark Freeport Zone off the SCTEX toll road. Adjacent to the country's largest and fastest growing airport. GGLC is a fully integrated and master planned logistics/business park catering to urban mixed-use business districts. The Gas Plaza will be the first commercial development within GGLC and is located at the first intersection off the SCTEX, providing access to 100% of all traffic coming on and off the SCTEX Clark South exit.

Approximately 12 hectares of land, the Gas Plaza will be a high end retail/commercial outlet providing convenience and modernization shopping and commercial office space. Situated along a major 18-lane thoroughfare the Gas Station is comprised of 12,000 sqm and is supported by 20,000 sqm of retail space like branded concessionaires with complimenting office space.

In addition to serving routine traffic, the Gas Plaza will also provide all GGLC project fuel requirements estimated to excess of 40,000 litres annually.

GGLC is requesting all interested parties to contact:

John Rodes
Business Development Manager
Pangaea Development Corporation
0999 888 0888
jbrodes@pangaeamail.com

Municipality of Alitagtag
Province of Batangas

Procurement of Water System
Municipality of Alitagtag, Batangas

Invitation to Bid Number: INF-2012-02-01
Revised as: July 26, 2008

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Name of Contract: Water System Project
Location: Alitagtag, Batangas
Brief Description: Water System
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC): Php 2,000,000.00
Contract Duration: 6 months

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract to be undertaken, a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have the personnel and equipment listed in the Eligibility Forms available at the procurement office mentioned.

The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Checklist forming an integral part of the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) Memorandum Circular No. 04, Series of 2004 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The contract shall be awarded as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Invitation to Bid	February 27, 2012
2. Pre-Bid Conference	February 28, 2012
3. Deadline of Eligibility Documents	March 5, 2012
4. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	March 6, 2012
5. Issuance of Bidding Documents	March 7, 2012
6. Pre-Bid Conference	March 8, 2012
7. Receipt of Bids	March 9, 2012
8. Opening of Bids	March 9, 2012

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Telefax (02) 815-4964

Cubao, Quezon City Branch
421-0043 • 421-1401 • Fax 913-4910

SM Megamall, Mandaluyong Branch
(632) 519-1897 2389 • Fax 637-8330

South Harbour, Manila Branch
244-0536 to 39/311
Telefax 523-8711 loc. 111 or 116 • Fax 528-4004

MORESCO-1

INVITATION TO BID

NAME OF PROJECT	ABC (LUMP SUM)
LAPU-LAPU MUNICIPAL COURT	PHP 4,500,000
BID FEE	PHP 10,000.00

Bids higher than the stipulated ABC will be outrightly rejected.

Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/corporations with at least sixty percent (60%) of Filipino ownership.

Please read Instruction Sheet on Submission of Bid Documents for the said bidding.

ACTIVITY	DATE	TIME	VENUE
SUBMISSION OF ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTS	MARCH 1 TO 14, 2012		PBAC SECRETARIAT OFFICE, OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER, MORESCO-1, MAIN OFFICE
PURCHASE OF BID DOCUMENTS	MARCH 15 TO 21, 2012		PBAC SECRETARIAT OFFICE, OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER, MORESCO-1, MAIN OFFICE
PRE-BIDDING CONFERENCE	MARCH 16, 2012	10:00 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING (10:00 AM)	MTC-PTC LAHUDMORESCO BOOM, MORESCO-1 MAIN OFFICE
OPENING OF BIDS	MARCH 22, 2012	10:00 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING (10:00 AM)	MTC-PTC LAHUDMORESCO BOOM, MORESCO-1 MAIN OFFICE

Only Bidders who are eligible and have purchased the Bidding Documents will be allowed to attend the Pre-Bid Conference.

All bids submitted must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of cash, cashier's check, surety bond or bank draft in the amount equivalent to 2.5% of the amount of the bid, which will be valid for at least 120 days counting from the date of the opening.

The MORESCO-1 hereby reserves the right to waive any formality in the undertaking, to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding null and void, and to accept the most advantageous to the government. MORESCO-1 likewise reserves the right to reject any bid found to be non-responsive to the requirements of the Bidding Documents.

For queries, please contact the PBAC Secretariat.

(Sgd.) EUGENIO L. HOLANDES, CPA
Chairman, PBAC

CENTRAL PANGASINAN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
San Carlos City, Pangasinan
Tel. No. 567-2033 / 567-5146

INVITATION TO BID

Classification/Area, District	Bid Security per Category (in Pesos)		
	AB	C	D
Category A (Above 1 Million)	2,000	1,000	1,000
Category B (500,000 to 1 Million)	2,000	1,000	1,000
Category C (Below 500,000)	2,000	1,000	1,000

NOTICE OF SEARCH FOR NORSU-PRESIDENCY

Eligibility Requirements:
- Must be a natural born citizen of the Philippines;
- Must be at least forty-five (45) years old but not more than sixty-five (65) years old on the day of the application for the position;
- Must be a holder of a master's degree;
- Must have a record in public administration;
- Must have at least five (5) years of experience in administrative work in a college or university, preferably in the field of higher education;
- Must be of good moral character and must not have been convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude;
- Must be physically and mentally fit to perform the duties of the position;
- Must not be related within the fourth (4th) civil degree of consanguinity or affinity to any member of the Board of Regents, to the President, to any Vice-President, to any Dean, to any Director, to any Chairman of a Department or to any person holding a managerial position in the University or in any of its constituent units;
- Must not be a candidate for any elective position in the government;
- Must not be a member of any political party or group sponsoring any candidate for any elective position in the government;
- Must not have been dismissed from any position in the government or any private entity for any cause;
- Must not have been convicted by final judgment of any offense involving moral turpitude;
- Must not have been found guilty of administrative offenses;
- Must not have pending criminal or administrative cases in any court or body;
- Must not have been candidate for any elective position in the government three (3) years before the search;
- Must not have been fined or penalized by the government or any private entity for an amount more than Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00) or its equivalent in other currencies;
- Must not have been removed from office as a result of an administrative case;
- Must not have been convicted by final judgment of violating Republic Act No. 3019, otherwise known as the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, and Republic Act No. 1379, otherwise known as An Act Declaring Forfeiture in Favor of the State any Property Found to Have been Unlawfully Acquired by any Public Officer or Employee and Providing for the Proceedings Therefor;
- Must not have been convicted by final judgment of violating Republic Act No. 6713, otherwise known as the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees;
- Must not have been convicted by final judgment of violating any environmental laws; and
- Must not have been convicted by final judgment of violating any provision of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995.

Interested candidates may secure the prescribed form for submitting requirements from the Office of the Chairman, Board of Regents, Northern Samar Island Regional Colleges, Inc., Catarman, Northern Samar.

Applications and requirements must be submitted to the Office of the Chairman, Board of Regents, Northern Samar Island Regional Colleges, Inc., Catarman, Northern Samar not later than March 15, 2012 at 5:00 p.m.

Applicants shortlisted will be interviewed by the Board of Regents.

Hon. Patricio B. Lagumbay, M.D.
Chairman, Board of Regents

Dr. Francisco B. Arcilla
Officer-in-Charge

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

LICENSE FOR PRIVATE RECRUITMENT AND PLACEMENT AGENCY

PRPA LICENSE NO. **N-1240-020** — D. ISSUE — D. RENEWAL
T.I.N. 003-023-514-000

This license is issued, pursuant and legally entitled to lawfully operate in:

ANGELINE SERVICES, INC.
#1 TIP OF CORNS Farms Compound, Old Zaniga
Mandaluyong City

pursuant to Executive Order and Omnibus Rules implementing the Code.

This license shall be valid in the Philippines for the period **10 May 2010** to **11 May 2012** unless sooner revoked, cancelled or suspended for violation of the Labor Code and related issuances. Transfer or sale to any other person is strictly forbidden this license is not valid.

By authority of the Secretary of Labor and Employment, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Department of Labor and Employment to be affixed hereto, at the office in the City of Manila, Philippines this **10th** day of **February 2010**.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. ALAN M. MACHEREN, CESO III**
Regional Director

(Assistant Secretary is hereby authorized to affix seal before signature dates.)

BAC Res. No. 6-11-2012

BUSINESS

More firms to increase workforce this year

BSP survey shows positive employment index

By Michelle V. Ramos

MORE companies intend to hire additional workers in the months ahead as a means to cope with an expected increase in demand for their goods and services amid a likely faster growth of the economy, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said.

Citing results of one of its latest surveys, conducted between Jan. 6 to Feb. 14, the BSP said the employment outlook index, which indicates the intention of firms in the country to expand their workforce in the coming quarter, settled at a favorable +24 percent.

This was better than the +16.8 percent registered in the survey three months ago and the +23 percent obtained from the survey conducted a year ago.

A positive index means that the percentage of respondent firms that cited plans to hire more workers in the coming quarter exceeds those that do not have such plans.

Businesses to hire workers are seen to help reduce the country's unemployment rate, which stood at 5.4 percent in mid-October last year.

"Favorable employment prospects are anticipated across sectors, as companies gear up for the expected pickup in demand," the BSP said in the report.

According to the central bank, the plans to hire more workers were cited by respondent firms together with their intention to expand operations in the second quarter.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said the results of the survey substantiated projections that the Philippines could avert some growth this year despite the problems confronting the global economy due to the debt crisis in Europe.

Guinigundo said the BSP concurred with forecasts that the euro zone might enter in to a mild recession this year. He said such an event would have a dampening effect on growth of the Philippines, but added that there were favorable factors to offset the ill effects of the crisis in the Western region.

The euro zone is a major export market, host to many overseas Filipino workers and is one of the sources of foreign direct investments and official development assistance.

"Europe is now going into a very difficult situation that one can describe as recessionary, but we have reason to consider the adverse effects of what is happening in Europe," Guinigundo said separately.

He said efforts to increase trade with Asian markets as well as rising demand for Filipino workers in alternative labor markets would help offset the impact on the Philippines of the euro zone problems.

Guinigundo said expectations that consumption of Filipino households would increase further this year was favorable to businesses and was expected to help the domestic economy grow faster this year despite the crisis in Europe.

Benign inflation in the country encourages households to spend and businesses to invest in capital goods.

The Philippine economy grew 3.7 percent last year. The government aims to accelerate the growth of the economy to 5 to 6 percent this year.

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FIRST PACIFIC LEADERS MAKE THE FUTURE THROUGH INNOVATION

Leaders Who Make the Future. MVP (above) delivering his message. First Pacific Executives, Presidents and CEOs of the various companies of the group (below).

"LEADERS MUST LEARN how to make the future in the midst of Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity (VUCA). The discipline of foresight can help leaders make better decisions today. We need not passively accept the future. Leaders can and must make a better future." (from the book Leaders Make the Future by Bob Johansen) This was the over-arching theme of the most recently held Innovation Forum of the Senior Management of the First Pacific Group of Companies. In these times of rapid change, Managing Director Manuel V. Pangilinan maintains that continuous innovation is essential for the group of companies to ensure the group's future success.

And in order to rise above the challenges of this VUCA world, leaders from the First Pacific Group of Companies - among them First Pacific Company Limited, ePLDT, Indofood, Maynilad, Media Quest, Meralco, Metro Pacific Investments, Metro Pacific Tollways, Philex Mining, PLDT, Smart, Digitel, SPI Global and Metro Pacific Hospital Group (Asian Hospital, Cardinal Santos, Davao Doctors, Makati Medical Center, Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Riverside) converged at the First Pacific Leadership Academy in Antipolo City to hold its Leadership Innovation Forum entitled "Future-Proofing Our Business". Respected futurist Bob Johansen from the Institute for the Future (IFTF) in Palo Alto, California and renowned innovation expert Karl Rozell shared their ten (10) year forecast and valuable insights on what it takes for leaders and organizations to succeed amidst a VUCA world. They both inspired and challenged the participants to push the envelope of innovation further in order to prepare for the future.

Co-thought speakers Bob Johansen and Karl Rozell shared their 10-year forecast and challenged the participants to be future-ready.

FIRST PACIFIC LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

BUSINESS

Cirtek may bid for 2 overseas firms to support expansion

By Doris C. Dumlao

LAGUNA-BASED semiconductor manufacturer Cirtek Holdings Philippines Corp. is considering bidding for electronics companies in China and Malaysia in line with its expansion plans following its stock market debut late last year.

Cirtek is likewise planning to boost its Philippine capacity by forming a joint venture (JV) with a Japanese electronics firm, a prospective tie-up that will open up the Japanese market for the company, Cirtek chief finance officer Anthony Reynoso said in an interview with the business list week.

The top officials of this large Japanese company are visiting Cirtek in Laguna soon to discuss the potential partnership for the establishment of a new manufacturing plant that will be 51 percent owned by Cirtek, Reynoso said.

The new facility will later be consolidated into the company's balance sheet.

"The plan was already raised in one of our meetings," he said, adding that Cirtek was hopeful that a deal would be firmed up soon.

He said it was possible that the new plant would be located near Cirtek's existing plant in Laguna.

"The beauty about the West Philippine Economic Zone Authority is that it is run very professionally. The investor will appreciate how simple the process is," Reynoso said.

One year after a great earthquake in Japan, Reynoso said Cirtek's prospective Japanese partner realized how its value chain could easily be disrupted, without back up offshore operations. On the part of Cirtek, he said the tie up could be its ticket to gain a foothold in the Japanese market.

"They have already done JVs in other countries so it's not something new to them, so we are hopeful. Their bosses won't have to go to some hero if they are not serious," Reynoso said.

Cirtek is also looking to acquire offshore manufacturing plants to expand its clientele base and minimize the risk of disruption in its production if and when disasters strike.

"It also offers redundancy even in case something happens in the Philippines," he said.

The prospective acquisitions in China and Malaysia could boost Cirtek's business. The plan is to subtask a letter of intent and

GIVING BLA

Joint venture with Japanese firm also planned

The investor will appreciate how simple the process is.

PHILIPPINES' TALLEST TWIN TOWERS BSA TWIN TOWERS at St. Francis Square, Ortigas Center

From the left: Arch. Rogelio Villarosa, Mr. Luke Rosas, Mr. Timothy Johnson, and Arch. Pablo Palafox, Jr.

BSA Twin Towers located at St. Francis Square is now officially the Tallest Twin Towers in the Philippines awarded by the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH) of Chicago, USA. With a height of 213.75 meters, there is no doubt that this 55-storey residential/commercial condominium stands out among the rest.

At the signage inauguration, Mr. Timothy Johnson (CTBUH Chairman) formally handed the certificate to Mr. Luke Rosas, President of St. Francis Square Group of Companies and Developer of the building. Arch. Pablo Palafox, Jr. (Country Representative of CTBUH) also attended this momentous event. Several television networks were present during the signage inauguration. ANC, Studio 23, Unang Hirit, and Unsaping Kay Ganda news crew had the chance to interview Mr. Johnson and Arch. Palafox Jr., DZMM Teleradyo news anchor Jory Rebate had the unveiling ceremony broadcasted live on air.

BSA Twin Towers condominium-hotel is now accepting bookings and reservations for daily, weekly and monthly accommodation. For inquiries, please call 633-1888 loc. 831 or 832.

Century spending ₱1.5B for new residential project

By Doris C. Dumlao

HIGH-RISE condominium developer Century Properties Group Inc. is investing P1.5 billion to build a residential building with the tsunami-design of Italian luxury fashion house Missoni.

The 52-story residential building, Lumiguraw, is the fourth tower to rise in CPG's six-tower Pasig riverside Arqua Private Residences project in Mandaluyong City which was outlined to cost a total of P7 billion.

In a press briefing on Friday, CPG executive vice president Jose Mario Serrano said the group through subsidiary Century Limited Corp. was ready to bring to the market additional residential units in Arqua, following the market success of the first three towers – the 43-story Magara, 46-story Sutherland and the 47-story Orchlea.

The upcoming residential buildings in Arqua, designed as a riverside "modern, tall color" amidst an urban jungle, are all named after the green essentials of the wood. The residential units in Lumiguraw, named after the most majestic waterfall in Africa, are expected to be turned over to buyers by 2016.

The nine-tower Arqua project brings to the local market extra property in response to the strong demand for flats, of which Lumiguraw will account for P3.5 billion, Serrano said.

Arqua Lumiguraw will offer 610 units for pre-selling prices averaging P148,000 per square meter for the first five towers. The means the smallest unit of 27 square meters is selling for P3.9 million while the largest unit with 148 sq.m is selling for P20.5 million.

"In the Philippines, Century has found a market appreciative high design and luxury contemporary living," Serrano said.

Missoni, founded in 1953 as a knitwear label in Italy by Ottavio and Rosita Missoni, grew into a fashion empire run by three generations of the Missoni family globally recognized for its creative use of patterns and prints, Missoni applied the zigzag motif of the fashion world throughout the decades for elevating knitwear to an artistic form, and for its unconventional and consistently progressive style.

In 1996, the Italian fashion house diversified into furniture, home accessories and interior design through the brand Missoni Home.

It was one of the first fashion lines to launch out into home lines like Versace, after a partner of CPG in another residential project.

There are also two Missoni-branded hotels in the world, one in the Edinburgh, Scotland and another in Kuwait.

CPG plans to sell the units to domestic end-users such as young upwardly mobile professionals, overseas-based Filipinos and foreign buyers. With 70 per cent of CPG's sales coming from the international market, Antonio said CPG had the biggest overseas market share among Philippine high-rise condominium developers.

"We feel we're following the money trail," he said.

The Lumiguraw tower offers the rich and colorful Missoni Home-designed living option.

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NGCP lines up 6 major transmission projects

Trees company

Required investments may hit P103 billion in 5 to 8 yrs

Conrado R. Bautista III

By Amy R. Remo

NATIONAL Grid Corp. of the Philippines, operator of the country's electricity superhighway, plans to embark on six critical transmission projects worth a total of P96 billion.

These projects will make the national grid the strongest among its peers in Southeast Asia, said the company.

In a recent briefing, NGCP deputy department manager Giovanni R.A. Galang identified the six major projects as the P16-billion North-East Luzon 230-kilovolt (kV) Backbone; P9.2-billion Western Luzon 500kV Backbone; P4.6-billion Metro Manila 500kV Backbone; P11-billion Bulacan-Mindoro interconnection; P36-billion Cebu-Negros-Panay 230kV Backbone, and the P22-billion Leyte-Mindanao transmission Project (LMP).

An alternative to the LMP, it said, may still not be feasible, is the P20-billion Negros-Mindanao interconnection project which, if chosen, would jack up the total investment requirements for the six projects to about P103 billion over the next three to eight years.

All the projects, which are targeted to be put up over the next five to eight years, are geared toward improving and increasing the capacity of the transmission facilities to meet the additional volume to be produced by several new power generation facilities.

The Northern Luzon 230-kV backbone project targets to provide adequate facilities up north, to cater to the huge wind power generation potential of the region. It also aims to improve the overall reliability of the transmission network.

NGCP has already identified the initial locations of the substations to be put up along the 230 kV loop, which will serve as the connection point for the wind power plants. These are the sites chosen to tap the proposed wind power plants in the area.

In anticipation of the increase in the generation capacity in Bataan and Pangasinan, the Western Luzon 500 kV backbone project aims to develop a strategic corridor backbone that will allow the transmission of power from the generation sites to Metro Manila and ensure the overall reliability, security and stability of the grid.

The Metro Manila 500 kV backbone will, meanwhile, address the growing power demand in the metropolis. Metro Manila accounts for about 30 percent of the total power load in Luzon and would thus require a transmission backbone that has a capacity to handle huge volume of power from the north and south.

In the meantime, the P11-billion Batangas-Mindoro interconnection project targets to develop a 2,249-kV interconnection facility between the main grid in Luzon and the power grid in Mindoro.

THE DISPUTE over the multibillion-peso property development project in Baguio City right there in that near-prime area called Camp John Hay, seems to be worsening.

Embroiled in the fight are Camp John Hay Development Corporation, and private firm, CBDevco (Camp John Hay Development Corp. belonging to the Pil Gaisano group).

In the heydays of privatization in the 1990s, or so to speak ago, the BCDA and CBDevco entered into a partnership to develop Camp John Hay. The property has been turned over by the AFP military to the Philippine government. In effect, BCDA owns the landowner; CBDevco, the developer.

They have already been filing court cases one after another against each other.

BCDA also tried to oust CBDevco out of the facility by filing a "breach of contract" by the company claiming that the company failed to put "cost" for the property amounting to P1 billion.

But CBDevco also filed another "counter" case, claiming damages and almost P11 billion due to the alleged failure of BCDA to fulfill its part of the agreement with the company.

One of those was that BCDA would take care of all the needed government permits for the development, particularly the issuance by the ECC...the "environmental clearance certificate."

You needed the ECC to draw a big area such as Camp John Hay for an ambitious property development project.

To return the favor to BCDA for its filing the "opposing" case against CBDevco, the firm obtained a TRO from the court to prevent BCDA from taking over control of the facility.

To top it all, both sides have put their disputes into the open, constantly skirmishing in media. Recently, for example, BCDA leaked out information that, as part of its development plans, CBDevco wanted to cut down more than a thousand trees.

Such a news item, particularly since it came from the BCDA as a premeditated media leak, obviously aimed to stir some emotions among environmentalist groups.

Already, the need to clear up the trees for construction has been the biggest problem that stalled the Camp John Hay project.

Some environmentalist groups have already started a protest movement to protect the trees in the area. Those groups have also gone to media to air their objection to the cutting of even just a single tree.

Anyway, CBDevco had to get back at BCDA, saying in its own media statement that it was in fact the other way around, that it was the BCDA master plan that proposed to cut down those more than a thousand trees.

In effect, according to CBDevco, BCDA was lying. CBDevco's executive vice president and COO Alfredo Yñiguez III also said the BCDA even imposed such a plan on his company.

Here, only last year, both sides were in the in dark of negotiations, as CBDevco was trying to restructure its P1-billion debt with BCDA, representing the unpaid "rental" of the facility.

At that time, according to Yñiguez, the company proposed not to BCDA that its "master plan" would entail the cutting down of more than a thousand trees. Thus, CBDevco proposed an alternative plan that would involve save more than half of those trees.

The company also claimed that BCDA refused to act on the application of CBDevco to cut down the trees for almost two years now. What could be the reason?

Yñiguez, who used to be a financier executive working abroad, has a simple explanation. He said such "inaction" by BCDA was in any of engulfing the operations of CBDevco.

"It is only in the Philippines that you see a government agency deliberately attempting to wreck the business of a legitimate private investor," he said.

The question is, is there favor in the BCDA doing that?

Last week, we wrote about the refusal of the BOSS to issue ECC for the Yñiguezes existing project. It seems that Environment Secretary Ramon Paje defected to the line imposed by the provincial government on "open pit" mining, which was the method proposed by mining firm Itogon-Suyoc.

The very next day, we received a letter from an employee of the DENR, which is the agency tasked to issue ECCs, although the letter qualified that it was an "official" response from the DENR. The letter said:

"Every ECC application requires social acceptability and that is in the form of barangay certificate, mayor's clearance, Sanggunian resolution.

"Second, projects only require the barangay certificate, but larger projects require clearances from the LGUs in the municipal and/or provincial levels.

"It is a basic requirement even since I got a job in the DENR offline (other than EEC is issued) in the Cordilleras.

"The purpose is that, since the project was applied for an ECC as the Environmental Impact Assessment Process (EIAP) of the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), the EIC is the evidence that the project was acceptable to the LGUs and the constituents represented by the LGU officials.

"This is to avoid complaints."

"NGOs funded by individuals or organizations always try to kill potential big tax collections. It is the job of the company to manage the situation.

"It is always about money saving the environment and moral issues as a cover of the time in session.

"This is the information from somebody who worked inside."

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₱216-M banana plantation gets perks

THE BOARD of Investments has approved a P216-million banana plantation project, which is seen to help boost the country's exports to key markets and create more than 200 new jobs.

Local firm Arabi Banana Corp. has registered with the BOI as a new producer of Giant Cavendish bananas for export. The company operates a plantation in Compostela Valley.

According to Trade Undersecretary and BOI Managing Head Adrian S. Cristobal Jr., the company is targeting to produce about 1.12 million boxes yearly and plans to expand its seedling plantation to 250 hectares in the future.

Its commercial operations, which started last month, is expected to boost economic activities in the region.

The project boosted the industry's capability to supply key Asian policy export markets, including Japan, Cristobal said.

Arabi Banana has entered into a contract with a multinational corporation engaged in exporting tropical fruits. Under the contract, Arabi's produce will be marketed under a different brand to countries like Japan and the Middle East.

The Philippines is currently the world's second biggest exporter of bananas next to Ecuador, according to the Philippine Banana Growers and Exporters Association. The country is also a major banana supplier to Japan, China, South Korea and New Zealand. The industry provides employment to 320,000 people.

In 2010, Philippine exports of fresh Cavendish bananas had amounted to ₱720 million. Agriculture projects, in general, were among the categories approved by the BOI in 2011, with total approved investments for this sector alone amounting to ₱1.917 billion.

"Agriculture-related investments will help diversify our export offerings consistent with the Philippine Export Development Plan (PEDP). Those in countryside," added Trade Secretary Gregory L. Domingo.

Amy R. Remo

₱1-B in loan facility OKd for Clark airport

CLARK International Airport Corp. and Land Bank of the Philippines recently signed a P1-billion loan facility for the second phase of the expansion of Clark International Airport's passenger terminal.

CIAC president and CEO Victor Jose I. Lazatin and LBP President and CEO Gilda Vera Jacinto signed the loan deal at the Land Bank of the Philippines Building in Makati, Manila.

Lazatin said CIAC was scheduled to start on March 5, the bidding for Phase II expansion of the P700-million passenger terminal.

The loan will also be used for the improvement of other support infrastructure facilities including navigational equipment, which is vital in the operations of the airport.

Portion of the loan will also be used for CIAC's working capital.

"Land Bank and CIAC have strengthened their partnership and we will continue to support CIAC's vision for the development of Clark Airport as the premier gateway of the country," Pino said during the signing ceremonies.

For his part, Lazatin said "this (loan facility) manifests the continued support and confidence of Land Bank in CIAC and the airport."

During the event, Lazatin noted the dated start of commercial operations in Clark of Air Asia Philippines on March 28 and Air Philippines on March 29.

In the meantime, CIAC reported a 33 percent growth in the Clark airport's international flights. "We expect this to further grow with two more airlines starting their operations in Clark soon," he added.

BUSINESS

US IRS may tap local banks to help in campaign

Renewal of Stradcom contract pushed

By Dianne L. Lucas

SUPPORTERS raised to save billions of pesos in hardware and software startup costs if the government opts to renew the information technology contract between Stradcom Corp., on one hand, and the Land Transportation Office (LTO) and the Land Transportation Franchise Regulatory Board (LTFRB) on the other.

In a statement, Stradcom spokesperson Margaux Salcedo said the savings would amount to more than P7.5 billion worth of IT infrastructure which the company already has in place for its current—and expiring—deals with both agencies under the Department of Transportation and Communications.

At the same time, Salcedo reiterated the company's call to the DOTC to reconsider Stradcom's proposal for contract renewal before a total and outright rejection of the IT firm's proposal.

Salcedo said Stradcom will, under a renewed contract, invest another P2 billion in the rehabilitation of the existing infrastructure and expansion of the services of the LTO to include online transactions, mobile ticketing and license verification for drug tests.

On top of this, Stradcom is offering the government a yearly revenue share of P500 million or P2 billion pesos spread over 10 years as prescribed in a renewed contract.

Despite DOTC's statements that an IT infrastructure will be in place by the end of Stradcom's contract on February 2013, Salcedo expressed doubts on the ability of any firm to construct from scratch a nationwide IT facility for one of the busiest government agencies in a span of six months.

In fact, Salcedo said it took Stradcom five years before a Certificate of Acceptance for an IT facility was issued by the government.

More importantly, she said, the government was sending wrong signals to—should be proponents of the Public-Private Partnership projects.

Roughly 800 personnel employed directly and indirectly by Stradcom or the LTO-IT project in 240 sites across the country will be displaced by the non-renewal of the Stradcom contract.

Stradcom maintained the LTO after it won awarded the contract for the project in 1997 after an open, competitive public bidding. Stradcom was evaluated to have offered the most technically viable solution and the lowest charges over the remaining public

Pamantasan ng Cabuyao (PnC) connected through PLDT SME Nation's myDSL Biz Powerpack package, provides Wi-Fi connectivity for its students and linking admin offices's email and internet services. Picture shows Pamantasan ng Cabuyao President Roberto Rimando (2nd from left) with PLDT SME Nation Area Sales Head Gilbert Sierto (1st from left). Also in the picture, PnC Vice President for Administration Dr. Gaudencio Lat (far left), PnC IT Administrator Emmanuel Manuel (2nd from left), PLDT SME Nation Area Sales Supervisor Robert Talag and PLDT SME Nation Account Associate Cyrs Alonzo (5th and 6th from left, respectively).

Going after tax evaders

By Doris C. Dumlao

BIG BANKS in the Philippines may soon be deputized by the troubled Bureau tax collection agency Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to perform audit functions on FIL-Americans and green-card holders.

This is in line with the US government's crackdown on tax evaders, a shifting international tax report said.

Mississippi-based tax lawyer Kurt Rademacher said in an interview on Friday that the measure was becoming much tougher for American nationals or permanent residents using offshore markets as tax havens because banks around the world were now under pressure to join the IRS' extra-territorial audit network across the globe.

Under the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (Fatca) passed by the US Congress, the US will order withholding taxes on purchases of US securities, whether stocks or bonds, from banks or US financial institutions on behalf of their private banking clients if these institutions sign up for a program to audit clients with US connections.

"Investment citizens or green card holders, regardless of where they are, have to pay taxes on income. There are a lot of them who are not paying," said Rademacher, who is from US law firm Butler Snow O' Mara Stevens & Cannada PLLC.

He said the goal of Fatca was to encourage non-US institutions to perform an audit function for the IRS.

"The IRS did not have the manpower or resources to, a lot of places, and it does not have authority to audit financial institutions to determine if they're doing business with American tax-dont pay their taxes."

Facta was contained in the Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment (HIRE) Act, which took effect on March 18, 2010. The 398-page implementing rules on FACTA came out on Feb. 8.

"It's everything works out fine way the US Congress has designed it," Rademacher said. "There won't be a penny of withholding tax that will be collected on the purchase of US securities because all banks would sign up for the program."

Rademacher said exchange rates in the Facta program would cause an increasingly more difficult global business environment for banks in the Philippines, for instance, he said failure to sign up for the program would hamper a bank's ability to invest in the US capital markets on behalf of pension clients.

"A lot of businesses are family controlled and these businesses generate a lot of free cash flow that are invested in a broad-based portfolio. That portfolio of high-net-worth families are invested in US equities. Philippine banks that don't sign up will be unable to offer those securities to their high-networth clients," he said.

While "extremely territorial in scope," Rademacher said banks and clients with US connections must brace for such an overreaching measure as revenue-raising initiatives in huge budget deficit.

DOE seeks easing of rules on gov't oil exploration deals

By Amy R. Nunez

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy is seeking the issuance of an executive order that will carve out the controversial EO 556, which barred any government agency from entering into an agreement or contract with another entity for the exploration, development and production of oil.

Energy Undersecretary Jose M. Layug Jr. said Executive Order 556, which was signed by former President Macapagal Arroyo in June 2006, had become a "stumbling block" for PNOC Exploration Corp." in its efforts to tap partners in its projects.

While amendments to EO 556 are being pursued, PNOC EC should be allowed to take in a partner on condition that it is legally, technically and financially qualified, he said.

Layug said the proposed amendments to EO 556 would allow PNOC EC to enter into more service contracts.

EO 556 earlier ordered state-run Philippine National Oil Co., now PNOC EC, as well as PNOC EC, to hold a "strict bidding procedure" for the contract involving the exploration, development, and production of crude oil from the Camago-Malampaya reservoir instead of executing to "farm-in" or "farm-out" contracts.

The order effectively restrained Malaysia-based Mitra Energy Ltd.'s right to take part in the development of oil deposits in the Camago-Malampaya field off western Palawan, two months after PNOC EC had signed the farm-in contract with Mitra.

Layug's issuance of EO 556 was involved negatively by the local and international business communities, as this signaled instability in the policy environment in the country.

Cirtek may bid

From page B1-1

join a competitive tender in the first quarter of the year. "But we'll bid for what we feel the value is, not just to beat the competition," Bayaras said. The negotiations are in their early stages, he said.

The opportunity in China is interesting given the large market offered by the mainland and its close-in base to the US and China that could complement Cirtek's own, the official said. At the same time, he said Cirtek was interested in this Chinese firm's advanced technology. The electronics firm in China is owned by a fund that is now keen on exiting, thereby putting an end to the block.

Meanwhile, he said the target in Malaysia was a semiconductor factory owned by an operator like Cirtek. This company is likewise above Cirtek's size and had very little debt, he said.

If these expansion opportunities push through, Bayaras said Cirtek had room to finance these through either additional borrowing or sale of shares. "We don't have any debt in our balance sheet so we can use either debt or equity. We'll raise debt as well and maybe we can do a secondary offering," he said.

Cirtek is an independent complete solution provider for semiconductor manufacturing of semiconductor devices with 23 years of experience in the assembly and testing segment. It provides turnkey solutions that include package design and development, wafer probing, wafer back grinding, assembly and packaging, final testing of semiconductor devices and delivery and shipment to its customers' end users. It listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange in November last year under the ticker "CIREK."

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NorthRail project delayed anew

By Paolo G. Montecillo

DOTC holds off talks with Beijing

THE CONTROVERSIAL NorthRail project faces more delays after the government has decided to hold off any negotiations with the contract's Chinese proponents due to the prevailing political landscape in Beijing.

To translate the Philippines from any sudden policy shifts in Beijing, the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) said it would postpone discussions until China's leadership changes is completed.

DOTC Secretary Manuel Roxas II said newly installed Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Ma Keqing wanted to schedule a trip to Beijing in the middle of the year.

"We had a very productive talk, and they are trying to schedule a visit to China. We wanted to find out the next steps for the project," Roxas said. "But due to it, the Chinese leadership is going through changes. They want to meet with us earlier but we don't want our projects to be disrupted because of that."

Late last year, the DOTC submitted major revisions to the NorthRail project. Under the proposed new contract, the Philippine government will retire the terms of reference to ensure that the contractor has the capability and track record to carry out the rail project.

The new project will contain an entirely new main section that will connect the Makati central business district to Caloocan, a 12-kilometer distance. The second phase will link Malolos in Pampanga to Clark airport, another 15-kilometer distance.

The project, to be funded with a concessional loan from the Chinese Export Import Credit Agency, involves the construction of a train line connecting Metro Manila to the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport and other provinces in Northern Luzon for $5.2 billion.

But construction has been delayed. The deadline to complete the first phase was moved from 2005 to 2013, and the total cost estimate has ballooned to $11.8 billion.

The DOTC likewise noted that the project's Chinese contractor, Sinomach, had asked for more money for construction, despite the evaluation of the project's cost.

NORAD

Coke's N. Luzon plant taps green energy

By Yolanda Sotelo
Inquirer Northern Luzon

SAN NICOLAS, Ilocos Norte—The Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. (CCBPI) is shifting to a renewable source of energy, using biomass to produce steam needed for the plant's bottle cleaning equipment.

The plant in Barangay 22 here is the latest of five CCBPI plants to use rice hull, dry leaves, used carton and other waste materials to fuel the machine that generates steam to heat the equipment, said Aaron Ancla, head of the Ameritech-Inclustrial Workers Inc., the firm that operates the energy source for the plant.

Ameritech also operates the biomass boiler of the CCBPI plant in San Fernando City in La Union, Hagan, Isabela and Malaysia.

The CCBPI plant in Calasiao, Pangasinan, also uses biomass technology, but it is operated by another company.

A CCBPI presentation explained how the biomass boiler works: "The rice hull and other combustible biomass are gasified by

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DOF eyes new revenue collection tack

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CAB: Airlines need to tone down strict trade rules

PNOC RC initiates dev't of 3 hydro plants in Negros

Bankers seek G20 growth strategy

IMF puts pressure on European leaders

US Fed offers few hints of new stimulus round

Banque luxury market to pare, says Credit CEO

BUSINESS

Markets' eyes on Europe to keep risk rally alive

Surging oil prices threaten recovery; key data awaited

LONDON—The spotlight dishes on Europe this week as the ECB feeds banks a second huge helping of three-year funds and the region's leaders meet to strengthen the financial firewalls needed to contain the debt crisis.

Manufacturing data from the giant US and Chinese economies will be scrutinized for any signs of flagging growth, while rising oil prices and the battle to supplement Greece's second bailout deal will enter the market backdrop.

Riskier assets have enjoyed nearly two months of gains, driven by renewed bouts of monetary easing from the world's major central banks and hopes of economic recovery.

Global equities are up over 20 percent from October lows, while 10-year Italian bonds have returned 15 percent as dollar-based investors the yen.

But the sentiment behind the rally is seen as increasingly fragile.

"There's this fear of missing out than bar, paraphrased a lot of investors to buy but the minute anything looks remotely negative they'll get out," said Jeff Sirs, president and Chief Investment Officer of SIRCM Wealth Management.

This week, risk assets should get some support from the European Central Bank's second long-term funding operation on Wednesday when European banks are expected to borrow up to half a trillion euros ($660 billion) of cheap cash.

Euro area money supply data for January due on Monday should offer an indication of how successful the ECB's first three-year tender in December was in easing the credit freeze. It was widely credited with extending a debt in Europe's financial markets, easing pressures on the banking system and bringing down borrowing costs for struggling euro zone countries like Italy and Spain.

The second three-year offering may well be the last, especially if Inflation erodes.

But to safeguard the benefits, European Union leaders meeting in Brussels on Thursday and Friday will need to agree to improve their defenses of the euro zone.

That means better economic policies and a beefed-up financial safety net, and proposals in coming region's two firewalls—the existing EFSF bailout facility and the permanent ESM fund due to come into effect by mid-year—will be at the core of the debate.

While markets await action by the EU's leaders, they will also mark the next steps by Greece to meet the terms of its new €130-bil-

lion-euro bailout, which has so far only served to ease concerns of an imminent and disorderly debt default.

Further afield, investors will be watching out for more clues to the state of the world's top two economies.

Indicators of manufacturing activity will come from China, which releases its official Purchasing Manager's Index on Thursday and the US, due to unveil January durable goods orders data on Tuesday and the ISM factory activity barometer for February on Thursday. Reuters

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Big US funds ready to invest in Europe

LONDON—US fund managers who succeeded by called the bottom of their home credit market in 2008 are putting money back into Europe in a sign of returning confidence in the euro zone.

These investors say distress is making it easier to price risk and estimate the recovery value of European assets. Their European counterparts, bruised by the region's two-year-old debt crisis, are proving far more reticent.

"Investors are much more sanguine about the future than perhaps Europeans are, and much more willing to put a bit of risk back on the table," Bob Marquardt, founder of fund investor fund of hedge funds figure, told Reuters.

"Hedge fund investors in Europe have been very shy—they run if you cannot tell up in a minute and a half but for more money is being raised in the US for this type of investment, it's to their blood," he said.

Many US funds had viewed close of Europe, perplexed by months of political wrangling and doubts that the European banking system had enough liquidity to stay afloat.

But the launch of the European Central Bank Longer-Term Refinancing Operations (LTROs), a federal Reserve commitment to cheap credit and positive US economic numbers have set the opportunities for domestic buys and encouraged them to look to Europe.

The US banks are particularly disinterested in the riskier end of credit, such as high yield and distressed debt investing.

Investors like Avenue Capital, Anchorage Advisors, King Street Capital Management and Och-Ziff Capital Management are among those to have raised billions to invest in Europe, and are now starting to put that cash to work. Reuters

Telcos squeezed as consumers use mobile Web

LONDON—Consumers' increasing love of using services like Facebook and YouTube on their smartphones is hurting many telecommunications carriers sidelined while hosting the crux of ever-growing demands on their networks.

As users log up mobile Internet services, the Web giants are strengthening their relationships with consumers, while the telcos are finding their connections with customers reduced to a monthly bill and a handset upgrade.

More than half of Facebook's users already access the social network from mobile devices. Facebook said in its letters filing for a long-awaited initial public offering—and that proportion is expected to keep growing.

The operators complain that the Web giants are hitching a free ride on the networks in which they are investing billions, while the services like Facebook Messenger are eating into the SMS text revenues on which they have long depended.

They've talked about charging bandwidth-heavy Internet players like movie streaming Netflix or Google to carry their traffic, but have been rebuffed by the Web giants and cowed by regulators worried that such deals would warp the level playing field of the Internet.

"The Facebook IPO is going to fuel that discussion around Facebook and Google and how these players are affecting the industry," said David Green, European director of telecoms research firm Ovum, ahead of this week's Mobile World Congress in Barcelona, the world's biggest wireless fair.

Telecom carriers are racing to deploy next-generation mobile networks, which will be able to carry the exponentially increasing amount of data generated by the likes of YouTube many times faster than current networks can. The GSMA, the operators' association, estimates that telcos will have to spend $600 billion in the next five years to upgrade mobile networks and buy licenses for fourth-generation wireless spectrum. Reuters

BUSINESS Monday
Business Features Editor Margie Quiroga-Espino

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Toward a more developed PH by 2050

By Michelle V. Remo

A 377,339 recently published by multinational financial services firm HSBC says the Philippines, a middle-income country with about 2/3 percent of its population living below the poverty line, will be the 16th largest economy in the world by 2050.

By then, according to the study, the Philippines will have outperformed all of its Southeast Asian neighbors, including Singapore.

The HSBC study cites the Philippines' growing population, which is said to meet the growing demands for labor as more investments come in, as one of the factors that will help the country significantly progress over the next four decades.

The rosy projection for the Philippines has thrilled some, but has also caused others to raise their eyebrows.

The study—titled "The World in 2050" and authored by Karen Ward, Nick Robins, and Zoe Knight of HSBC—has rekindled the debate over whether the country's growing population is really an advantage or is doing on the Philippines' quest to becoming a developed economy over the long run.

The release of the study came amid ongoing talks on the Reproductive Health (RH) bill, which is both being strongly pushed by supporters and strongly blocked by critics.

> Is the country's growing population a boon or bane?

Some economists say the bill, which seeks to promote family planning, is long overdue and has been one of the missing pieces for faster economic growth; others decide it down, cautioning against what they consider as its potentially adverse effects on the economy.

Side 1: Why the country's growing population is a boon

Dr. Ernesto M. Pernia, economics professor from the University of the Philippines and a former economist from the Asian Development Bank, says a growing population serves as an advantage for an economy only if it meets the quality of labor required by businesses.

DE VERA

ABCDLA

PERNIA

RAMOS

The problem with the Philippines, he says, is that growth in its population is driven by poor households who cannot afford to provide education and other basic needs for their children. Consequently, he says, these children grow up finding difficulty in getting jobs and end up being poor themselves. This trend leads to the problem of inter-generational poverty, he says.

'Shoddy'

"It seems that HSBC, in drawing its conclusions, has considered the size of the population, completely ignoring the fact that for a labor force to become an asset, it must be educated," Pernia says, describing the conclusion of the HSBC study as "shoddy."

Pernia says policymakers should acknowledge that resources—both of private households and the government—are just not enough to educate all Filipino children.

That point is substantiated both by the significant number of out-of-school youths who belong to households that cannot support them, and the insufficiency of public schools, classrooms, and other facilities needed to provide good-quality education to all the country's school-aged children.

The problem of poverty has been cited by many international institutions, including The ADB and the World Bank, as one of the biggest challenges that the Philippines has to overcome.

Educated workforce

While other Southeast Asian countries were able to reduce their poor populations over the years, the Philippines has seen its poverty incidence rise.

Latest government statistics show that the number of poor Filipinos stood at 26.5 percent of the Philippine population in 2009, up from 26.4 percent in 2006 and 24.4 percent in 2003.

The poverty rate in the Philippines in 2009 was much higher than Indonesia's 13 percent, Thailand's 8.1 percent, and Malaysia's 3.8 percent.

Pernia opines that the projection that the Philippines will leave outperformed all its Southeast Asian neighbors by 2050 was highly unrealistic given the country's rising poverty. Another problem hindering growth is the lack of investments, which Pernia says would

TOWARD B4-2

Public private partnerships: Promises, problems, prospects

A PILLAR of the Aquino government economic plan is PPP (referred to as PPP countries as PI or P cubed), in a number of discussions with friends and colleagues from different circles (including members of our college cluster) speculation and rumors on the skilled work force) on PPP, it is clear that most Filipinos have only a rudimentary understanding of PPP that underwanding being translated as follows. The government and the business community collaborate to build and/or provide needed public infrastructure and/or services.

Many remain inadequately informed about the nature, the definitions, and considerations of these proposed partnerships, and questions about what such partnerships may involve. Many have heard the praises for PPP as our way ahead. Still others point to the limitations that even national leaders (notably formerly Mar Roxas) supreme of PPP. Others have heard of specific objections not so much to PPP as a concept as much as the way people seem to unthinkingly accept it as a panacea.

Given these, I thought it prudent to do some research into PPP and explain some of its basics that it will iron many issues regarding PPP and get us to move faster in appropriately using it to get economic activities going in the direction we wish these activities to go.

In "googling" for material on PPP, I came across an article by Nilda Aloy Elamson in the International Review of Business Research Papers (Volume 6, Number 2 July 2010, pp.350-360) titled "Conceptual Issues in Defining Public-Private Partnerships." Among the many I found, this was the most succinctly informative. What I read I tried to summarize below.

1. PPP has become widely accepted globally and is popular in public sector management when it is seen as serving several ends.

2. It came out of an earlier (1980s) movement known as "New Public Management" (NPM), itself part of the bigger "reinventing government" movement which had its beginnings in the 1970s.

3. The "reinventing government" movement involved privatization, the use of market mechanisms, rationalizing in the delivery of public goods and services, deregulation and the reinvention of the role of government (this latter thinks there was the evolved perception that government, especially in the developing world, runs out delivering the goods and services efficiently, if at all, either because of insufficient resources or the inability to function efficiently).

4. NPM shifted the focus from "public service" to "service delivery" which means public services need not be delivered by a government entity but whatever government could do it effectively and efficiently.

5. There is, however, a concern over what PPP is, and what it is not about.

6. It is seen by some as a set of management and governance; by others as a financial arrangement; still others see it as a tool for the development process; while some skeptics see it as a "novel game," aimed at making privatization more palatable to those who fear "privatization" as "commercialization."

7. As a tool for management and governance, the varied definitions contain three common features:

A. There is cooperation over a considerable period because of the nature of the projects that typically use PPP;

B. Risk-sharing and other forms of sharing (knowledge, skills, resources) figure prominently in the models; and,

C. A product or service mutually driven is jointly produced, and implicitly all parties stand to gain from its sale or provision.

8. PPP is also often used as a tool for financial arrangements. One of the continuing uncertainties within ever-changing concepts have come our "special purpose vehicles," for example. Other tools that have evolved included:

A. BOT: Build-Operate-Transfer (the most common form from arrangements take);

B. BOO: Build-Own-Operate-Transfer; and,

C. BOO: Build-Own-Operate.

9. PPP is also seen by many as a tool for the development process.

Given the complexities and the immensity of the development challenge, PPP models as tools of development have four common characteristics that make them attractive.

A. They focus on the common objectives of the collaborators developed typically through communications, dialogue and negotiations. Assure the parties that objectives are mutually acceptable and that promised rewards are deemed fair by everyone;

B. The agreement reached means there will be specific commitments from all partners involved;

C. The collaborators will involve the recognition not only of the strength each partner brings to the collaboration but the weaknesses as well. The collaboration must be designed to strengthen each partner's weaknesses by the others; and,

D. The variety of stakeholders involved—from business people, to government bureaucrats, to NGOs, to communities, etc.—ensure a built-in structure for checks and balances. (The last statement does not guarantee that the structure will work as desired. That will have to be properly planned.)

10. Lastly, there are many who see PPP as a "language game," as in labelling certain socially less palatable concepts to make them acceptable, even desirable.

The label PPP is seen as a deliberate attempt at obscuring the real nature of the intervention, which is privatization. Others say "go as" a government service and/or replacing a public responsibility.

So PPPs are not a one-size-fits-all tool that one can use on every duty of different projects. The choice of a PPP mode must take into account the nature of a project (whether it is the construction of a facility or the provision of a service, or both), the ultimate beneficiaries and/or users of the project (whether it is a toll road vs. a relatively prosperous area or a farm-to-market road in a poor area), and a number of other considerations.

From the descriptions available, it is clear that PPPs are workable by nature and the forms they take will vary according to the nature of the project and the desire of the collaborators, mutually agreed upon.

It becomes clearer why the PPP heralded by BOA (E-2-Nay) as the tool that would spur the economy, has not worked the speedy wonders that many expected. Improperly conceived and badly implemented, PPPs could result in monumental failures, wasting precious scarce resources and damaging public goodwill.

It will be good for the government and its PPP partners to approach it with extreme urgency, publishing the considerations for a chosen PPP and requesting appropriate project inputs from along. This way people are kept abreast that, indeed, things are moving in the right direction along the straight and narrow path as promised in 2010.

(The article reflects the personal opinions of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is chair of MAP PPP committee and professor at the Asian Institute of Management. Feedback at mapi@philnet.com.ph. For previous articles, please visit <map.org.ph>)

Toward a more developed PH by 2050

From page B4-1

need an educated workforce to come into the country.

Foreign direct investments into the Philippines was estimated to be just a little over a $1 billion in 2011, paling in comparison with Malaysia's $10 billion and Indonesia's close to $20 billion.

Total investments, including those of locals, stood at only 13.6 percent of the Philippines' gross domestic product in 2010.

This figure was inferior compared with Cambodia's 17.2 percent, Malaysia's 21 percent, Thailand's 28 percent, Indonesia's 32 percent, and Vietnam's 39 percent.

"Our neighbors have been addressing the issue of poverty and investments. At the rate we (the Philippines) are going, it is impossible for us to be more competitive as Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand by 2050," says Ferrin, who is an advocate of the BBSM.

Ferrin also notes the drag caused by poverty on tourism, which many considers to have a great income potential if the country's natural resources were the sole factor to be considered. The UP economist says the picture of poverty is a scandal for some tourists.

Former president's doubts

The HSBC study had caused not only an economist but also a former president to express his doubts.

Former President Fidel V. Ramos, who says he regretted that the administration that came after him did not make a strong follow-through on the population program during his term, says the projection of the HSBC study was alarming, but cautioned that "it is a fallacy."

"It is not the quantity but the quality of the labor force that counts," Ramos says.

He says that without a strong family planning program that will address poverty, becoming a progressive country is just not possible.

Ramos cites another study, commissioned by the Asian Development Bank and released last year, that projected the Philippines to remain among a group of slower-growing economies in Asia over the 2050 period, thus making problems as growing workforce of unemployed, and lack of investments, among others.

The ADB-commissioned study, titled "Asia 2050: Realizing the Asian Century," grouped the Philippines together with Myanmar, Laos, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Maldives, Mongolia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyz Republic, among others.

On the other hand, it categorized Brunei, Singapore, South Korea, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan to be among the most progressive Asian economies by 2050.

Ramos says the study commissioned by the ADB should serve as a wake-up call for the Philippine government and the private sector to address pressing problems that continue preventing the country from catching up with its neighbors.

War against poverty

He says the country, first and foremost, has to address the problem of poverty—adding that population management is a practical way to do it—if it is to become one of the most progressive economies.

"The country's biggest battle is not against terrorism; it's against poverty," the former chief executive opines. Winning the war against poverty will symbolize effective tendencies for armed conflict, such as that seen in the southern part of the country, he explains.

Aide 2: Why the country's growing population is boon

Meantime, there are also economists who agreed with the HSBC's claim that a growing population will help the country's efforts toward progress.

Bernardo D. Vera, economics professor from the University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P), an Optus Net contributor, that up-

grades the BSP bill, says that before one hangs on the significance of quality over quantity of population, the point does not. Sufficient number of population is needed to run an economy should first be established.

"It is true that economic development is not only a matter of quantity nor is country only of having vast numbers. However, a country has to have warm bodies to begin with," De Vera says.

De Vera opines that the problem of poverty, although a heavy burden, is easier to solve than the problem of not having enough people. He says concerning poverty, poverty poses the serious threat of population aging and dwindling number of human resources, which many advanced economies now face.

He says the projection that some more developed economies in Singapore will be overtaken by the Philippines by 2050 hinges on the fact that the former are now facing serious problems of population aging.

De Vera also disagrees with the notion that there are not enough resources to educate all school-aged children in the country. He says government resources, if efficiently monitored and allocated, should be able to accommodate the education needs of Filipino children belonging to households who cannot financially afford sending kids to school.

De Vera A. Abela, also an economics professor from the UA&P, says a large population is an advantage rather than a drag on economic growth based on two fronts—advancement of knowledge and economies of scale.

"Advances in knowledge are better in a large population. Innovations, intelligence and genius is not confined to the rich. It is normally distributed, and, therefore, with a larger population you would have an absolutely larger number of outstanding people who do make a difference," Abela says.

He adds that economies of scale (which happens when cost of per-unit production declines as volume increases) can be more easily achieved with a large population. Countries with smaller population have to rely on the export markets just to achieve economies of scale, he explains.

Abela says previous studies have concluded that 50 percent of economic growth can be traced to advancement in knowledge, while 15 percent is attributed to economies of scale.

On the HSBC's projection that the Philippines can become one of the biggest economies in the world by 2050, both De Vera and Abela say that such a projection is realistic.

De Vera says ongoing efforts of the government to improve governance and doing something from the private sector as far as investments are concerned should bear positive results over the long term.

Abela says existing resources of the Philippines, including human capital, will help the country become progressive decades from now.

"Diversifying the findings of the study outright is unscientific and biased. "Yes, I agree with the conclusion of the HSBC study that the Philippines objectively has what it takes to be on the Top 20 biggest economies in the world by 2050," Abela adds.

Where the two sides meet

Although people disagree over whether the country's growing population is boon or later be the economy, there is a consensus that good-quality education and training are badly needed to have the human resources required to attract more job-generating investments, which in turn are necessary to sustain a robust growth for the Philippines.

"Education is key" 65% Private-sectors.

"We can achieve faster growth through education," UA&P's De Vera says.

However, whether the country has enough resources to provide good-quality education and training for its people is still open to debate.

It really is a bed . . .

From page B4-3

Carrefour garden.

Nature-inspired landscapes and water gardens are his favorites, he adds.

On another side of the garden is an elevated lawn, just up to serve as a venue for big affairs. There are also palms and plants accessed by antique machines like carabaos (ancient draught animal), Ifugao (rice grinder), and boulders arranged on one side to provide seats for around 200 people.

Minimalist

"I planned several minimalist plants and palms. They never bear any nursery in Bay, Pansol, Talavera town," Jose says. They include Washerbar palms, phoenix palm, bungang arina, champoux, variegated agave, curly fern, foxtail, golden ginger, screwpen and bougainvillea.

Alongside the elevated swimming pool, various palms, grasses and other plants provide a soothing ambiance.

The pathways, even those leading to the kitchen of the Americano-style house, are lined with carabao grass.

In front of the office, a few meters from the house, is a mini-waterfall. At the back of the house, where the guest house and garage are located, is a big mango tree that provides shade.

Personality

Palm trees are planted throughout the complex, with small plants providing a picturesque look in the house and garden.

Angelita believes that one's surroundings may pertain to his or her personality.

"If your surroundings is well-arranged and beautiful, it will project that you are well and good," Angelita says. "If it's just a hodgepodge, and your plants are dying, then there seems to be disorder inside you."

Angelita says the sublime cries, but when she sees one or two of her plants in the garden dying, she cries wholeheartedly.

"My gardeners take care of the plants very well to avoid seeing me cry," Angelita says.

She has a modest-and-neat room to maintain the garden.

She also says their garden is reason enough for her not to travel very often for leisure.

Special

"Why should I? Our garden is my haven," she stresses.

The garden also plants a special beauty—it helps to strengthen the bond between Angelita and her husband.

"When we have a little misunderstanding, we just find ourselves in different spots in our garden as if in deep meditation. I approach him and she approaches me and, without a word, we touch hands. Then the misunderstanding is gone," Angelita explains.

The top expatriate, who does big to small...the architect.

"It can do a lot of good for you and your family," Angelita adds.

A 1230sq garden (right) complements the house with gables (above).

THE VACATION house of the Castellano couple in Malaysia, Sta. Domingo.

It really is a bed of roses for N. Ecija trader

With the help of a seasoned landscape artist, businesswoman turns a rice trading complex into a garden

Text and photos by Anselmo Roque
Inquirer Central Luzon

STO. DOMINGO, Nueva Ecija—For one who is in a rural setting, performing a yeoman's job, running two rice mills, managing a lot of workers and dealing with lots of customers, the days must be rainy and boring.

But businesswoman Angelita Reyes-Castellano of Barangay Malasymboo has been living like so for years. But, as she explains, living rural and based a far from how she actually feels.

Now in her early 50s, Angelita manages the family-owned "A. Castellano Farms."

Antidote

Her business supplies at least 30,000 bags of milled rice every month to customers throughout Luzon.

"I started by putting up a small grocery store. Then I went into small-scale palay buying. Later, after securing a bank loan, I got into the business. My husband engages in onion and rice production at our 20-hectare farm," Angelita says.

Her husband, Ireneo, 53, used to be a former vice mayor of the town.

Angelita's business still entails palay-buying for the modest stock of the milled at her two rice mills.

She has 25 regular employees and, during peak season, the manpower about 100 contractual workers. Also, her company now has 17 trucks.

"Who wouldn't get tired, and feel bored at times, in this kind of business?" Angelita asks.

But Angelita has an antidote for it. She looks fresh as a daisy every day. In fact, when the heavens rained her miseries around most, but a sign of tiredness or stress was detected from her.

Landscaped garden

Angelita, who can easily be mistaken for an actress, looks calm and refreshed, ready to flash a sweet smile. She doesn't want to be photographed, though.

"Our garden is my haven. It refreshes us, binds us, and keeps our spirit soaring," Angelita says.

Where the family decided to put up a "mansion-style" house 12 years ago, the garden was on top of Angelita's list of priorities, she explains.

The home-garden-office-guesthouse complex sits on a 4,000-square-meter plot.

Angelita then contracted Lorayo Isaac, a noted landscape artist from nearby Talavera town.

Concept

Isaac is credited for the refurbishment of about 300 residential, commercial, and resort establishments in Metro Manila and various parts of Luzon.

"I thought of a concept in life that will make us happy while savoring a living," Angelita says. "Lorayo captured that concept in the garden that he developed for us."

A part of the garden has been turned into walking terrains, with champagne castles, various kinds of plants, boulders, grass and waterfall "to appear as a natural-looking small mountain," says Isaac, who accompanied the heavens in a visit to the

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Horizon Land launches house and lot units in Florida Sun Estates

Federal Land Inc., through its subsidiary Horizon Land, launched in December the first house and lot packages of Florida Sun Estates, its first resort-use development and resort community in the burgeoning town of San Tiso, Cavite inspired by the sunshine state of the U.S.

Florida Sun ESTATES San Tiso, Cavite

Three single detached unit models on 120 square meter lots are the choices for homebuyers wishing to reside in the Jacksonville phase, one of several residential and commercial clusters in Florida Sun Estates. The single-storey Avery model features a 36 square meter floor area, one bedroom and one toilet and bathroom. The two-storey Bellamy model has a floor area of 55 square meters, three bedrooms and one toilet and bathroom. The Cherry model is the same as Bellamy but with a 64 square meter floor area and two toilet and bathrooms. All unit models have a living area, dining area, kitchen, porch and provisions for carport and laundry areas.

The Jacksonville phase, which is named after Florida's largest city, is one of three subdivisions of Florida Sun Estates. The development also has a cluster of low-rise residential buildings called Oriental Garden Residences, and a commercial cluster called The Plaza.

The Oriental Garden Residences consists of the four-storey Bellflower, the five-storey Cypress and the two-storey Acacia lofts. Units of the Bellflower are ready for turnover while the Cypress is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2012 which features 30 square meter units with one bedroom, living area, kitchen and a toilet and bathroom. The Acacia will feature two-bedroom lofts suited for start up and their extended families.

Strategically located at the intersection of Governor's Drive and Gen. Trias-Amadeo Road, the Florida Sun Estates is accessible via alternate routes such as the SLEX, Aguinaldo Highway, Daang Hari and Amadeo-Tagaytay Roads. The site is also just a few minutes away from favorite leisure and recreational spots like shopping malls and golf courses. The lush-rural setting provides an idyllic complement to the community's modern facilities and the relaxed atmosphere promising healthy lifestyle.

General Trias is envisioned as the next industrial hub south of Manila. Several major industrial estates, such as Gateway Business Park, a world-class business community in Carmona and the New Cavite Industrial City in Maduyaphon, make Gen. Trias their home base. The strategic location of the Florida Sun Estates makes it an ideal abode for individuals who want to have an investment in a prime location in Cavite, as well as foreign investors who are looking for a suitable place to retire. It is also ideal for families who want an affordable yet laidback lifestyle and employees in the area's industrial estates seeking permanent residency.

For more information on Florida Sun Estates, please call its Manila facilities at (02) 894-4238 or Cavite facilities at 046 (509-1388.

E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph Website: www.inquirer.net/business

BUSINESS Monday

How secure is your bank signature card?

Text and photo by Ms. Esther Salcedo-Posadas
Contributor

THE LEDGE of Senate Corona's bank accounts brings to light a hassle, material gaps on signature cards. Bouncing are a few factors to consider.

A depositor opened a savings account at a leading bank in the country and was appalled to discover that the new accounts staff left the signature cards on top of a side table for the whole world to see. She called the banker's attention to the private information layer her was greeted with what seemed like nonchalance, possibly due to the volume of work the staff needed to finish that day or simply the lack of an established system in managing customer documents.

This happened many years ago. But the question remains—how secure is the information on your signature card?

LEDGING signature cards in bank is an unsound practice.

Past practices

Some decades back when banking lines were less stringent and bank customer interface was more personal, one could easily obtain blank signature cards and take them out of the bank premises (this is no longer allowed). There were also people who were less careful and would even sign the cards in blank (assuming the required signatures are affixed then the other information filled up later by other people).

Upon the bank's approval, signature cards would then be stamped as a cancellation in charge of verifying signatures in each transaction. Thus, withdrawals were often limited to the branch where you opened the account since the signature had to be verified by the designated officer. The officer would stamp and sign beside the approved signature.

Should a customer find herself in another branch requesting for a withdrawal of funds, he would likely follow a tedious process of submitting a withdrawal request or form that is then faxed to his official branch for signature verification. It may take a while before the other branch would fax back a reply or approval.

Despite the time procedure, it is worthy of note that possession of the signature cards remained only at the branch where the account was opened. As a precaution, it is also possible that a bank-up file could be stored at another specific location.

Current scenario

The advent of computerization and the Internet changed the way banks conduct business. Foreign banks were among the first in with their technological advancement and local banks followed suit.

Nowadays, a customer can conduct banking transactions almost anywhere in the world. Automated teller machines also provided much convenience to the general public.

But the computerization of banks has also altered the way signature cards (or the information contained therein) are handled. Gone are the days where its contents were purely limited to one person or one branch.

It is quite possible that your bank has already encoded your signatures on a computer, where access is given to the frontline personnel who will transact your withdrawal. We examples, if you happen to be at a mall and decide to get some money over the counter (at a branch where you do not open an account), the teller would have no way of proceeding with the transaction unless he could verify your identity and signatures. He simply looks for your account information online to get the necessary data. From an information security standpoint, this means that more people are now privy to your signature data. The process is repeated when you visit another branch.

Future direction

But the protection of bank clients, there may be a need to reconcile the sequence of signature cards so its per. Hence comment. Perhaps it may be worth it to consider a more limited approach in signature verification or other creative solutions. Consideration would make it easier to pinpoint accountability on signature cards.

Overall, clients, until (a brief period when they entrust personal information to their banks. Without such assurance, it would be difficult to grow a relationship that is really based on trust.

(The author has worked for a number of local and international banks in the country. Her postgraduate thesis analyzed the feasibility of setting up asset operations for a foreign commercial bank in the Philippines. Her latest book, *Risk Life: Growing Meaningful Wealth"* is now available at National Bookstore.)

LIFESTYLE Arts&Books

'La Traviata' to kick off a year of operas for CCP

The Verdi opera is a Philippine-Korean collaboration

ANDREW Fernando and Rachelle Ann Go perform during the press conference of "La Traviata" at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

La Scala Fil-Am tenor used to find classical music 'not cool'

by Michelle T. Laguna
Contributor

FILIPINO-AMERICAN tenor Arthur Espiritu, 30, is a new name in the Philippine performing arts scene whose opera productions arouse fire and fat heroines.

He is referred to as "La Scala tenor" because of his stint at that illustrious opera house, and will do the role of Alfredo in "La Traviata" by Giuseppe Verdi at the CCP Main Theater on March 2-4.

Espiritu has been described as a regal tenor with a beautiful lyric voice. But for this much praised singer, going the way of classical singing has not always been a clear-cut road.

"I used to sing just for fun, to make me happy," says Espiritu. In a high-school student in New Orleans, Louisiana where he and his parents had emigrated, he joined the choir after much prodding from a teacher and performed in stage productions and Broadway musicals, at one time playing Hedwig's owl.

"My teacher, Mr. Thomas, was always pushing kids to do a little bit more than they should," Espiritu said. "He enrolled me in the Gifted and Talented program."

Under Mr. Thomas' wing, Espiritu learned to read music and his first classical song "Ave Maria" by Schubert. He went on to join a state-wide talent competition for high-school students and landed the first prize of $5,000. "It was the easiest money I could ever make."

After high school, Espiritu had set his sights on joining the air force and wanted take up aeronautics. But after a talk with his father, he had a change of heart. "When I got a scholarship to the University of New Orleans, we decided to go with music. Music made more sense."

But his parents were also insistent on a career in medicine and on Espiritu double majored in pre-med and music, taking on 23 units a semester. Later, he decided to concentrate on music full time and never looked back.

He earned an artist diploma from Oberlin College Conservatory of Music in 2004 and got both his Bachelor of Arts (2000) and Master of Music (2002) degrees from the University of New Orleans.

Espiritu has had many defining moments in his singing career. But he tells of two experiences that were particularly memorable.

"There's the gig in La Scala, Milan and also the one in Pittsburgh Opera," he said. "I was in the Young Artists Program of Pittsburgh Opera for two years and they gave me an opportunity the next year to sing the lead role in Bellini's 'I Capuleti e i Montecchi' with us. (So) I met Mrs. Laura Giovanetti and Vivian Tessman. I was surprised I had a good time with them. They're like gods when they sing but when you meet them, they're just like regular people. I was moved by that.

"I've always viewed opera singers and classical music as high brow and intimidating. I realized that it was not impossible to do this profession and still stay true to yourself. That was pretty defining for me and I realized I should move forward."

ART Fruit Espiritu and Rachelle Gonzalez

Arthur Espiritu had listened to Bon Jovi and Def Leppard and had a band where he played drums. But he got hooked on opera

La Scala fellowship

Espiritu won the Tenore alla Scala Award as part of the Belvedere Singing Competition in Trieste, Austria, in 2008. The award gave him the opportunity to train at the Accademia di Teatro alla Scala for six months in its Young Artists Program. "It was a marvelous staff of teachers there," Espiritu recalls. "They figure out if you're good enough to cast on their main stage ... and they gave me the role of Wilhelm in Cosi fan tutte. I was so glad. It was a defining moment for me because I had to prove to them that I could do the role."

He did Fernando again at the Teatro Filodrammatico, Piacenza, Espiritu says, is one of his favorite roles. "Fernando is a very romantic guy who is clueless. He's very serious and funny but he doesn't know he's funny."

Espiritu's career has included important assignments in Europe and the United States. Aside from his performances in La Scala, he has also performed with the Opera Frances in Paris and Theatre St. Gallen in Switzerland in the 2009-2010 season.

He has appeared on the main stages of Pittsburgh Opera, Theatre du Champs Elysees, Israeli Opera (Tel Aviv), Brandenburg (Ger.). He performed for the very first time in the Philippines at the Philharmonic Theater, Manila in Viva Verismo: "Manila Debut Recital."

From rock drummer to tenor

Opera music was once boring to Espiritu. "It wasn't cool to me. My favorite bands were Bon Jovi and heavy metal bands like Dream Theater and Def Leppard. I used to play the drums and we had a band in high school."

He says it's exactly those he made the leap to opera, saying something clicked in him. "It's actually listening to the mind, it makes me think. I realized that I grew intellectually singing classical music because I had to know all aspects of that genre. I had to learn what the composer was trying to do with it, science and research to sing this. I actually had to work hard. It was pretty compelling to me."

Hurricane 'Katrina' victims

Espiritu's parents returned to the Philippines after losing their house in New Orleans to Hurricane "Katrina." He remembers the day the hurricane struck. He was driving back to New Orleans from Pittsburgh but couldn't continue on.

"I had to get rid of my car because I knew I couldn't get down there. I decided to go to Pittsburgh where my best friend was. I just had my summer clothes and it was getting cold. So jackets. People heard about my situation when I was interviewed on radio. A lot of people helped me. I couldn't find my parents for our week, couldn't get in touch with them. It was a very scary situation. But they were alive, and survived. We rebuilt."

After losing all they owned in New Orleans, his parents moved to Arizona but decided to return to their hometown of Tarlac (Binit, in 2008. When he visited Bacnar "Tarlac" bit, they again suffered damage to their home and had to rebuild again. With his parents now living in the Philippines, Espiritu is considering making Manila his base.

"I feel that I need to go back to my roots and for a few years figure out what I can do here and see how it works," says Espiritu, as he is functioning and about to perform with the Pittsburgh Opera in 2013 and with the Theater St. Gallen this year and 2013.

He is excited about essaying the role of Alfredo in La Traviata.

He joins the Filipino cast led by Rachelle Gonzalez as Violetta and Andrew Fernando as Germont on March 2. Korean opera stars ... soprano Yeo Kyoung Ri, baritone Baeun Na, and tenor Jae Hoon Lee will perform on March 2 and 4.

Jun Jose Lee leads the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra which will provide live orchestral music, while the internationally awarded University of Santo Tomas Singers will render choral support.

Floy Quintos will direct the production with set and costume design by Eric Tiglao.

"La Traviata" is presented by the CCP in cooperation with the Opera Guild Foundation of the Philippines and the Daejeon Opera Company.

'La Traviata' to kick off a year of operas for CCP

By Arnulfo Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

FOUR VIOLETTA must be the original "prostitute with a heart of gold."

For the uninitiated, Violetta is the tragic heroine of Giuseppe Verdi's opera "La Traviata" (The Strayed One), based on the novel "La Dame aux Camelias," by Alexandre Dumas.

In the story, Violetta, a courtesan in Paris during the 1840s, has a lover Alfredo who is the heroine's friend. Alfredo's father is adamantly against the relationship because of Violetta's profession, and also because his daughter is marrying a scion of another prominent family.

In the end, Violetta, dying of consumption, gives up Alfredo so as not to cause a crisis to his family.

The opera and the novel have had many versions. Think of Greta Garbo dying poetically in a 1930s film or reporting in a retrospect ... tsi—if memory serves right...in the Salsado Tirnio Tagalog adaptation.

And now "La Traviata" will be staged anew at the Cultural Center of the Philippines on March 2-4, in a Philippine-Korean production featuring top-notch Filipino and Korean opera singers in major roles (performing during alternate nights).

The Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra performs under the baton of Korean conductor Jae Joon Lee. Floy Quintos is stage director, with set and costume design by Eric Cruz. The Guinness-record Santo Tomas Singers...under "Choir of the World"—will serve as the chorus.

This was announced at a recent press conference at the CCP by CCP President Raul Sunico, who described 2012 as the year of the Opera, at least in Manila.

"La Traviata" is the first of three opera events to be staged at the CCP Main Theater North, coming in June is "Madama Butterfly" and "Barber of Seville" in July.

"Opera is a relatively unknown art form in the Philippines, although it has been around for some time already," Sunico said. "It is a complete art form that combines music, theater, dance and design."

Sunico hopes that the CCP will, for its course and contemporaries in the art of opera will be well received by the Filipino audiences.

The Filipino lead singers are soprano Rachelle Gonzalez as Violetta (she performs on March 2), tenor Arthur Espiritu as Alfredo, and bass-baritone Andrew Fernandez as Alfredo's father.

The lead Korean singers are soprano Yeo Kyoung Yim (she performs on March 2 and 4), tenor Jae Wook Lee, and baritone Baeun Na.

Gonzalez, Espiritu and Fernandez were present during the press conference, performed some singalong as well as dramatic scenes from the opera, and answered questions from the media.

Asked how she brought out the feelings of the character Violetta, Gonzalez observed: "I've been in love before, so it's something to draw from for my emotions. The composer wrote everything for us. We just have to make it to the music. I just translated it (being a prostitute) in my mind, researched into the character and understood the character."

Fernandez quipped, "As a prostitute, Rachelle is not being real-istic."

ANDREW Fernando, Rachelle Gonzalez and Arthur Espiritu

Gonzalez said Violetta valued Alfredo's family more than her own happiness, so she sacrificed her love for him in order for Alfredo's family (from scandal)." And on that note, the sopranos, who is single, concluded "I would like to dedicate my performance to my family!"

On the other hand Espiritu, in "drag" into the character of Alfredo, said: "to create those painful memories I had. If you have someone unrequitedly, I can relate to that. So I dedicate this to my unrequited."

The message of the opera, Fernando said, is that "love conquers all. Love knows no limits." But he did not say to whom he would dedicate it to, if at all. Fernando described "La Traviata" as a "soap opera."

THE SEVEN artist-sisters

'Siete Marias' at Old Manila

SIX VEIN at the Old Manila Gallery is a unique celebration by show of sisterhood, aptly titled as "Siete Marias." Featuring the works of seven real-life sisters, namely, Lydia Velasco, Bella Felipe, Tessie Primicias, Nely Velasco, Sarah Domingo, Dulce Carlos and Tony Dumas.

If their individual styles each artist concentrates on the themes of flowers and women. All are daughters of the late Jose Velasco, the veteran scene designer for UP Players in the Fifties.

Old Manila Gallery is at 613, JM Megonial, Bldg. A, Muralla/Aduana, tel. 6360486.

COLLAGE of Siete Marias' paintings

Taiwan envoy calls on UST Rector

AMBASSADOR RAYMOND Wing, the new Representative of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO), paid a courtesy call on Rev. Fr. Rolando de la Rosa, OP, rector magnificus of the University of Santo Tomas on Feb. 8.

They discussed how to further enhance the academic cooperation between the university and TECO as well as some undergoing educational projects between the two countries.

REV. FR. Rolando Rosa (second from left) signs the book "Lumina Pandis, A Collection of Historical Treasures," a gift to Ambassador Raymond Wang; with Rev. Fr. Pablo Tang, OP, Vice rector, (left) and Mr. Wang (right).

St. Scholastica's fine arts and design students exhibit works

ARTSEDESIGN 2012, the exhibit of students of St. Scholastica's College Manila's Fine Arts and Interior Design, are ongoing till March.

"Artsesign" brings together Visual Design and Communication students at the ground floor Atrium of Escuela 1 de Ayala Center Makati.

Meanwhile, "Textile" showcases unconventional designs with RTW's reservation of the association De Dantas Filipinas Since 1931, the Dantas has provided residential care and other services for socially, emotionally and poor children. The graduating Interior Design students apply their design skills to renovating the residences. Their designs are on exhibit at 1412 Pres. Quirino Avenue extension, Paco, Manila.

"Fever" at the BHD Jeaners' Incarnate design exhibit opening on March 2. It will showcase varied furniture designs that seem funky in design but are really marvels of beauty and functionality. The exhibit will be at the Shangri-La Plaza, Edsa, Mandaluyong City.

Call (0906-3633332 or 6711755. E-mail pilipinas@ymail.com.

Korean soprano Yun-Kyoung Yi holds recital at Philamlife tonight

THE UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas Conservatory of Music with Philamlife presents celebrated Korean soprano Yun-Kyoung Yi in a recital on Feb. 27, 7:30 p.m., at the Philamlife Auditorium, UN Avenue, Manila.

Yi won the Grand Prix at the 4th Gonangsik Competition in Busan, Korea, and the second prize at the 37th Bellini International Voice Competition in Italy. She has performed the lead parts in La Traviata, Lucia di Lammermoor, Rigoletto, La bohème.

Yi graduated from Hoseo University, majoring in Voice in 2000. She earned her graduate degree also at Hoseo in 2003 and earned two diplomas from Accademia Internazionale and AIDEM academia in Italy in 2007. She is a visiting professor at Hoseo.

Yi will be accompanied by pianist Brad Burton, dean of the UST Conservatory, in a concert featuring songs and arias by Mozart, Wolfli, Rossini and Thomas.

Yun-Kyoung Yi, with other Korean opera artists Eunsun Seo and Jae-Wook Lee, will also be performing in the opera La Traviata, a production of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Opera Guild Foundation of the Philippines and Asiatican Opera Company of Korea.

Call UST Conservatory of Music at 7314022-406/311 local 8205.

PWU holds concert for 'Sendong' victims

THE SCHOOL of Music of The Philippine Women's University (PWU) will stage "Musika for a Cause," a benefit concert for victims of Typhoon "Sendong" on Feb. 29, 3 and 7:30 p.m. at the Philamlife auditorium, UN Ave., Manila.

PWU president Francisco Benitez said the concert is the culminating activity of the outstanding artistry of the month-long Voice Institute's anniversary celebrations of the school.

Dean Dr. Felicidad Prudente said the featured performers are violinist Joseph Evardo and pianist Rudolf Golez, PWU Festival Chorus, PWU Male and Female Swing Quartets under Maestro Sergio Eusebio and PWU Guitar Ensemble led by director Macorro Jose Ibabao.

Conductor is Atticus Cosme with Richelle Rivera, Ruth Germaniog, Jessica Peralta and Myra Barcelona as assisting pianists, while accompanists Elenore Cacnio will render classical songs, accompanied by guitarist Ben. claire Gatilo.

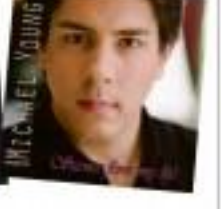
Solo members will be performed by guitarists Wendilyn Caspio, Frances Blaigne, violinists Jonathan Linsoco, Bry Casey Concepcion, Joseph Brian Cinco-Jesus and baritone Belford Malonzo.

Among the numbers to be performed are compositions by E. Debussy, E. Shindler, F. Chopin, P. Santiago, I. Kasilag, L. San Pedro, J. Mayfo and A. Guerrero.

Call 3392082 and 3384421 loc. 105.

Savoring saxophone music

By Antonio C. Hila
Contributor



THE SAXOPHONE is perhaps the least known instrument of the wind family. It is a peculiar-use flavor of band music to date as it was before after its maker Adolphe Sax had invented it in 1846. Many think it is a brass instrument owing to the fact that its body is made of brass. Like the clarinet, it is however sounded through a reed, not by blowing the mouthpiece against the brass instrument.

The sax is also a versatile instrument. It figures well as a solo instrument or in an ensemble, and above all the symphony orchestra. In the latter the saxophonists sits in the woodwind section. The sax sound is a bridge between the woodwind and the brass. It dishes out sheer power and haunting singing lines.

In the symphonic literature, one hails the genius of Maurice Ravel who scored the saxophone's solo part of the section "Old Castle" of Modest Mussorgsky's piano suite, "Pictures at an Exhibition." Ravel also treated this instrument with the same value in his other symphonic work, "Bolero."

By the 1920s, the sax was extensively being used in jazz music. Expectedly, it was and continues to be the lead instrument that collaborates with rhythm section in jazz music.

In Manila, hardly could a concert featuring the sax be watched. Recital recordings of the instrument are also hard to find until one stumbles and savors the fine recordings done last year of a German Filipina saxophonist, Dilkchael Young.

The recording was done locally produced by Arne-Peter Boglum (Arena Records), and made in Norway for the light classical music enthusiasts, the CD "Between Jesus my Life" is a welcome treat.

The disc includes transcriptions of Claude Debussy works such as "Beau Soir" and "Clair de Lune," among others; Puccini's well-loved aria, "O mio babbino caro," and the all-time favorite song of Bachmaninoff, "Vocalise," and the G#M "Elegy."

As the pieces in collaborative pianist, James Poet Sagun, they largely are all soothing disc, sensitive and witty. The list reveals its cardey through plaintive sound, dishing out silvery sonatas from sins to sonatas.

Young shifts gear in the other disc, "8 Tenor of Mi?," playing in harrowing jazz rendigurations with an ensemble composed of David Brandt, piano; Brad Anderson and Jay Alvear, drums. Their chemistry is astounding! It defines a glorious moment of dynamism, with each instrument capably projecting solid musicality. Listen to "Nhat Nguyen Xa Lang," "Biet Ruma," or the more intensively extended "Impressions" part I and II.

A couple of years back, one had the pleasure of listening to Dr. Young at the UP College of Music with the versatile collaborative pianist Lourdes De Leon-Limpatan. Soprano Angela Perez who doubles as a discriminating connoisseur arranged the pleasurable occasion. It was in that meeting that one suspects is more than the saxophonist but a Doctor of Musical Arts in saxophone performance, and is based here in Manila.

From his phoning, it was obvious Young connects with his music. Silver all he considers the saxophone an extension of his being. The CD's from this cost honorarium by

Visit www.michaelyoungsax.com to get a copy of the CD.

Ambassadors of Light off to Bangkok

THE AMBASSADORS of Light Foundation, Inc., a choir composed of visually impaired singers, will represent the Philippines in the 11th Asia-Pacific Harabonik Music Festival on Feb. 27-March 2, at the National Theater in Bangkok, Thailand.

Led by its founding president Ambrosio Ua, who is himself blind, the 40-member Philippine delegation will be joined by physically handicapped artists from 12 countries. This unique festival now on its 20th year gathers artists with disabilities in a celebration of music.

The AOL will render the song "Life is Like a Music," composed by Ua, a top music graduate of the Philippine Women's University. Highlight of the festival is the community singing of "Imelda," a song composed by King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand.

Joining Ua in Bangkok are AOL's soprano Carmie de los Santos, a PWU graduate, also Ma. Theresa Serna of STI-Marikina and board members Evaddelon Ortiz, Sonia L. Atutubo and Gloria Jamandre, choreographer.

Ridgepoint stages 'Velveteen Rabit'

RIDGEPOINTE BALLET will stage three performances from its student artists in a series of mixed classical and contemporary dance pieces by Lita de la Fuente-Castañeda, Melvin Montero, and Mousan Pendenciado, featuring Lita de la Fuente's ballet adaptation of the children's classic tale of a rabbit who wants to be real in the Velveteen Rabbit.

The gala is on March 3, 6 p.m., Irwin Theater, Rizal de Manila Escuela School.

E-mail ridgepointeballet@yahoo.com to inquire about its summer school, which starts April 16, and regular ballet program (July-March) at the Shire Lorenzo Sports Center (Arenas De Manila, Benjamin Kalaw, QC.

"TOY SOLDIERS" Regina Rivera, Kailey Esperon, Lucia Linares, Cinda Martinez

Poetry appreciation class

READING POETRY can be one of the most inspiring activities, if only more people knew how. Designed by Words Writers' Workshop, with Ingenhoul and MIZOard Lifestyle Center, will hold "Notes to Inside the Soul: A Poetry Appreciation Class," March 18, 2-5 p.m., at the MIZOard Lifestyle Center.

The poetry appreciation class aims to demystify the elements of poetry so the reader can focus on taking inspiration from the poems. Poet Carlomian Arcangel Becerra, author of three collections, including "Clairvoyance" recently published by the UST Publishing House and "The Embodiment's Book of Enlightenment," a children at the Manila and Book awards, will lead the class in this enlightening afternoon of readings, discussion and a fun writing exercise even non-writers will enjoy.

Tailored poems can receive inspiration as well as poems from Becerra's books will be read, discussed and shared.

Class is open to lovers of literature and people looking into learning how to appreciate poetry beyond the textbooks. To complement the nourishing aspect of the class, Ingenhoul Makati will serve healthy nuts and shake bone broth as Ingenhoul nourishes the body.

Registration fee is P650. Pre-registration is required. Download the form at www.design@yoursdo.com and e-mail to dbw.workshop@gmail.com by March 28, 2012. Payments should be made through bank deposit at Banco de Oro only (details will be emailed).

E-mail dbw.workshop@gmail.com. Say seeing! Ingenhoul is at the GALP of the MIZO Card Lifestyle Center at Sri Bunio de Abeza corner Senator Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati.

Sarap-to-the-Bones Fried Chicken for Only PhP299!!!
Max's Launches its Biggest Chicken Takeout Promo

MAX'S RESTAURANT, the brand that has captured the hearts of Filipinos for over four decades, is launching its biggest chicken promotional ever. Starting February 29, customers can relish the delicious Max's Restaurant chicken in the country and bring home their favorite Regular Fried Chicken for a significantly good take-out deal of PhP299! Serving PHP10 from the original price.

"Filipinos have an endearing habit of "dining out" food while they dine at their favorite restaurant. It's part of our gastronomical enhancement, family entertainment. With Max's Chicken Take-out Promo, we want our customers to bring home the most sumptuous favorites in their families. Max's brings-to-the-home Fried Chicken," said Rodney Sandoval, Corporate Communications Officer for Max's Group of Companies. Max's Chicken Take Out Treat will be available at nationwide from February 29 to March 31, 2012.

Learn about the most mouthwatering offerings from Max's. Log onto www.maxschicken.com or www.facebook.com/maxsrestaurants or follow Max's Restaurant Facebook fan.

New books by Roma Sianturi and Maraan to be launched

THE UST Publishing House, with De La Salle University's Bienvenido N. Santos Creative Writing Center and the De La Salle University Literature Circle, will be launching two books by UST Publishing Fellow Roma Sianturi and Connie Jan Maraan on Feb. 29.

"Geographies of Light" is Sinath Roma Sianturi's fourth book of poetry following on the heels of her National Book Award-winning book of poetry A Point of Origin, also published by the UST Publishing House. "Topographies of Light" includes the suite of poems that won the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Award for Poetry in 2007.

"Better Homes and Other Fictions" is the second book of prose from Connie Jan Maraan, coming after "Translator Stories 1977-1994" (De La Salle University Press, 1995), a collection of her short fiction. The new book gathers Maraan's essays on the teaching and writing of fiction.

Both books are part of the UST Publishing House's "BNC Years, 400 Books Project," which were recently presentation to the public at an exhibit at the UST Miguel de Benavente Library.

Sianturi teaches creative writing and literature at DLSU while Maraan works with the DLSU Social Development Research Center.

The book launch will be held from 6 p.m. at the Arturo Tolentino Seminar Room at the De La Salle University.

Reception follows at the Alfredo Kemey Reigen Room from 7-8 p.m. at the De La Salle University, 2401 Taft Avenue, Manila.

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Music and the arts in Cebu

Fr. Rudy Villanueva, the fictionist 'Renato Madrid' to lovers of literature, is Cebu's leading composer

WRITER-musician Monsignor Rudy Villanueva of Cebu City. The unsung conquest of music in the Visayas. Left: The late American pianist William Kapell in his youth: a legacy of consummate artistry and commitment to music

THE MANCO Polo Plaza Hotel in Cebu City: main sponsor of the Lizst concert in Cebu on March 22.

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

THERE'S A LOT more to music and the arts in Cebu other than the Sinulog Festival.

To be sure, classical music is alive with homegrown talents like Alma Lubos Hidd, Rudolf Erdos, Albert Tiu and Ingrid Sala Santamaria.

Pianist Jovenaire Cruz comes regularly for recitals and piano workshops. Stefanie Joseph Estrella has kept the violin repertoire alive and a local arts organization has a ready tie-up with foreign embassies that sponsor foreign artists as part of cultural exchange.

In the past, design Pete Dino teacher of Luciano Pavarotti was a frequent Cebu visitor and sang duets with the master of bass, subaru. In the late '50s, eminent pianist Rudolf Erdos also performed in Cebu. His most famous student, Cecile Licad, will return on Cebu March 27 courtesy of Cebu City's Marco Polo Plaza Hotel and Sacred Heart School Alumni Association together with Ateneo de Cebu and ADMI Alumni Association Cebu Chapter.

However, piano teacher Tina Rivada observed the dwindling numbers of piano students. She said young people would rather do the organ for a more lucrative career.

The birth of a Cebu symphony orchestra as realize initiated and nurtured by the Gala foundation was one of the proud moments of the Cebu cultural scene. It discovered new talents and it attracted music teachers from the Cebu but from Manila. But the orchestra was short lived since government would rather support homes and beauty queens.

In the past, even Cebu's politicians were musically literate. Former governor and cultural attendant Dionisio Jakosalem was a violinist and was also famous for his compositions, lovesongs.

At present, the unsung vanguard of music in Cebu is writer-composer Fr. Rudy Villanueva (known in literary circles as "Renato Madrid"), who is presenting the Ann Cavite College Sanctuary College Choir in a choral concert called "40 santos" on March 3-4, 7:30 p.m., at the St. Theresa's College Auditorium.

A prize-winning fiction writer, Fr. Rudy was reared in a musical borough and through. Ordained in 1965 after graduating from Cebu's San Carlos Major Seminary, he took graduate studies in English Literature in the University of Santo Tomas, and two years later was recipient of a scholarship from from Rotterdamland. This led him to the Iowa University in Minnesota where he earned a BS in Piano and Master's in Music Composition. (One of his famous schools is music on popular melodies Rainy Manilow.) He turned to composition and came up with his opus, "Leon Kilat: A Tagalog Opera."

Despite lack of government support for his music, Fr. Rudy didn't stop making music. He has a 200-volume collection of choral arrangements and his liturgical works used by church musicians include "Cantemos Cebuano," "Twenty-Four Masses," "Salterio Cebuano," "Festival Series" (3 volumes) and the volume "Melodies of Easter," a collection of his religious songs in English.

Fr. Rudy is lending full support for Lizst's Cebu concert. The musician-priest has known Licad when the latter first performed in Cebu when she was 12. Earlier, he had watched Licad's famous teacher, Rudolf Serkin, perform in Cebu in the late '50s.

In a latest development, Licad was named as a distinguished member of the ceremonial jury of the 2012 William Kapell International Piano Competition and Festival based in Maryland, US.

Also slated to the jury were Santiago Rodriguez (US), Richard Egan (England), Wing Qiang Li (China), Peter Rosenl (Germany), Ikuko Ogawa (Japan), and Claes Strandskov (Sweden).

The competition is named after a brilliant American pianist William Kapell, who died at age 31 and left behind a legacy of consummate artistry and commitment to music.

Lizst Alert!: Cebu solo recital program includes Chopin's Polonaise-Fantaisie in A-flat major, Op. 61; Three Mazurkas op. 50; Andante spianato et Grande Polonaise Brillante in E-flat major, Op. 22 and Liszt's Mirrors du "Sposalizio" de Sposalizio à Cimarosa da Concert and Apres une Lecture de Dante. Necessary guest lessons. She will also be based in Holy Angel University in Angeles City, Pampanga, and on March 23 at the Chinese Hotel in Galleria City. Website Sanour on March for Call. Tickets? Go Online 3 3302701.

Busy year ahead for Bayanihan

BAYANIHAN, THE national dance company of the Philippines has lined up a series of performances and events for the year that will present the richness and diversity of Philippine culture.

Starting off with a performance last Jan. 21 at the Music Hotshots, Bayanihan will be in the country's premier children's museum every third Saturday of each month. Children and museum guests are invited to watch the famous dances of Bayanihan and appreciate their music. Museo Pambata is a children's discovery museum with various programs in support of children's rights and a broad range of creative and educational services for children and adults involved in children's welfare.

Every first Friday of the month, the public will have a chance to witness the performance of Bayanihan that has earned for them among other international awards, the Gold Temple Award in Seoul and the World Prize "Premi Hamlet" in Palma de Mallorca, Spain. The Friday Special series is the Gonzalez Banzon Hall at UPMD.

From April 12-27, Bayanihan will conduct its annual Bayan Summer Workshop. It is a two-week intensive dance workshop conducted by the Bayanihan folk arts Foundation in cooperation with the famlicrafter Alfonso Tuchengco Foundation and the Philippine Museum's University Center for Culture, Arts and Music. The workshop has served as training ground for some of the finest composer's dancers and artists. Its culminating activity will be staged at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Perma Pallomada, the Philippine International Folk Dance Festival, will take place from Dec. 15-31 with its finale show on Dec. 26.

The festival is an undertaking of the Bayanihan Folk Arts Foundation, Inc., in collaboration with the Alfonso T. Tuchengco Foundation and the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

It was launched to promote solidarity and goodwill among nations and friendship among the participating countries.

Before the dance festival however, Bayanihan will engage in supervised workshops for the year from Dec. 19-27 at the CCP Main Theater. Call 5224601, 526 or 5306621 for more info.

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Stark, stylish, daring—an un-tragic 'Lear'

Peta's production is rendered in brilliant, exceptionally vivid Filipino prose by National Artist for Literature Bienvenido Lumbera

By Gilda Cada

THE PHILIPPINE Educational Theater Association's Filipino production of "King Lear," directed by Nonon Padilla and running until March 4 at the Peta Theater Center, opens with a familiar scene arrestingly reimagined.

Lear and his court, garbed in all-black Japanese-silhouette costumes, their heads uniformly shorn except for Lear's Christ-like shock of hair, assemble for the annual division of the kingdom among the monarch's three daughters. The backdrop is a hulking, dystopian metal-and-wood scaffold dripping with frayed plastic and dead tree branches, its garish fluorescent tubes shuddering to harsh light as the play's first order of business gets underway. (The production design is by Cian Gonzales.)

TRICKY Guerrero as Lear and Abner Dolina Jr. as Cordelia in Peta's "Haring Lear," directed by Nonon Padilla

No Lear (Tony Cacnio) asks his three daughters (all played by male actors—Nor Domingo as Goneril, Gary Lim as Regan, and Abner Dolina Jr. as Cordelia, the last the only character in white) to flatter him with fawning gratitude before giving each of them her share of the realm, a displacement curtain rushes on all three sides of the stage. The effect is of the play suddenly forced in, the well-mere dressers from and wearing it at a further remove.

Then, as Goneril and Regan are each rewarded her allotment, the corresponding third of the curtain, fashioned in the map of the daughter's new possessions, flutters down and is draped over her, implying not merely inheritance but investiture, a full and final transfer of power from the accompanying king to his scheming daughters.

When an incensed Lear eventually disinherits Cordelia for her inadequate show of affection, her lan third of the curtain is appropriated by Goneril and Regan, who tie it billow behind them as they exit the stage. Enter Gloucester's bastard son Edmundo (Jay Gonzaga), who slides beneath the cloth and flatulates in it, foreshadowing his sexual renegade soon rub elsewhere.

Persuasive

What follows this dense opening is a dark, stylishly stark

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DUSTIN — BY STEVE KELLEY AND JEFF PARKER

TULDRA — BY MARA CELI

HOROSCOPES

BY FRANCES DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY You have an eye for detail and a knack for solving problems. You also have a knack for finding fault. You'll need to be careful to avoid being overly critical. Personality: You have a keen sense of humor and are a natural entertainer. Lucky numbers: 2, 5, 9, 11, 14, 20, 23, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 63, 66, 69, 72, 75, 78, 81, 84, 87, 90, 93, 96, 99. Famous birthdays: Actor Jeff Bridges, actor Jeff Goldblum, actor Jeff Daniels, singer Jeff Buckley, singer Jeff Lynne.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Today is the day to step up to a bit of leap thinking. Who knows why, but you will find yourself thinking some deep questions of the universe.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) In a group situation, you may add more suggestions about how to improve the way things are done than necessary. Be firm, because others will admire your calm, decisive manner when you take charge.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) You will be selected to pass on others' suggestions about how to improve something, today in particular, bosses, parents, teachers, VIPs and authority figures will be impressed.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) You might need a powerful teacher today or a parental figure. You're attracted to philosophical knowledge, religion and unconventional seeing an profession.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Someone, and it's probably you, has good ideas about how to improve dealing with shared space. Your ideas are practical and will help everyone. Be diplomatic, and you'll be appreciated for your leadership.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) You're super-busy at an area of work, with your friends and possibly doesn't like the relationship itself can be improved. (There's always room for improvement.) Drama will pretty put a halt to the talks.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) You will be asked to pass on others' suggestions about how to improve something today in particular, bosses, parents, teachers, VIPs and authority figures will be impressed.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Someone and the suits are who thinks. You might be tempted to use tact to convince them to see things your way. Don't do it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) You enhance your ability today. Improvements within your life, in particular, garbage cans, bathrooms and laundry areas will be excellent places to focus.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) You are an extraordinary today! You'll signal that it's time call, invited, lead, act early, get in creative conscious sense of anything.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) You will be powerful in all your money dealings today. However, be careful accepting decisions you might feel obligated about buying something. Easy does it.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Take a realistic look at the current and your overall situation so as to improve your organization. How are you viewed in your image for the better?

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

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Concepts Sudoku — By Dave Thorn

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

A DARK, idiosyncratic take that registers high in conceptual daring, though sometimes to obscure lengths. The all-male "Hating Lear (/)" production design is by Gino Gonzales.

Stark, stylish, daring—an un-tragic 'Lear'

From page B1

"Hating Lear" that registers high in conceptual daring, though sometimes to obscure lengths. Confirm and the King's Fool, for beginners—the two main characters who speak without pause in the long—are played by the same actor. Eminent Shakespeare scholar Rhodora Taylor writes in her book, "Shakespeare After All," that it's "a disputed stage tradition [that] the parts of the Fool and Cordelia were played by the same boy actor" in the Bard's time. Here, Padilla makes the actor (a supremely persuasive one, Jeffrey Jay Fowler) play both roles.

He adds a further layer of implication by having the Fool speak to Lear through a puppet in the likeness of the king. At play's end, when Lear laments, "And my poor fool is hanged," clearly referring to Cordelia who, precise Petra like, Lee Lifshitz in his review, here the puppet drops down from the scaffold, hanged by the neck. The Fool is dead along with Cordelia. But so is the all-natural and purposive, the king.

DIRECTOR Nonon Padilla

WITH Mel Dominguez as Goneril, Gary Lim as Regan and Alnor Bruiko Jr. as Cordelia

Withering barrage

Except for Goneril and Regan's fraudulent words of love which are spoken in Shakespeare's tongue (itself a provocative deliberation), the entire piece is rendered in brilliant, exceptionally vivid Filipino prose by National Artist for Literature Bienvenido Lumbera.

Regan's "O, sir, you are old! Nature in you stands on the very verge..." for example, has become "Matanda ka na, at ang kalooganin mo ay siyang pilid na ng hangganan." Lear's cry, "You see me here, you gods, a poor old man..." is heartrending in the vernacular: "Nariro ako, isang matanda na puspos sa pighati" (—does not any [!]—Catholic hopefulness).

Padilla's allusion to Catholic symbology and iconography are not inevitable. In one of Lear's mad scenes, Brakinus, already from the exposition, clothes the air with blades of grass in his hands. Gino Ingles's flag-effecting brocade? Like a Lenten penitent. And when Cordelia reappears near the end, not only to die dressed in impressive white, she has also become a resurrection symbol, her right arm described in haughty sense and her hand in a planned fulcrum—Joan of Arc, or less.

Padilla draws the point home by the play's close when, moments after Edmund's rescued but mortally wounded grimaces on Edgar's (a strong turn by Mykle Johnson) assurances of the king's demise, the cast, candles in tow, reassembles and begin sprinkling lines that are clearly not Shakespeare's.

To what looks like an audacious bid to arrest a fated lesson, perhaps even a cautionary rule, from the spectacle of a king undone by the foibles and frailties of his doings and whose suffering seems devoid of any moral, objects, events or meaning, Padilla performs a reconciliation. The "Hating Lear" he's approaching is of the late lines of T.S. Eliot's seminal 1922 poem, "The Waste Land."

Stable social order

Eliot's cognizant work, commonly seen as the disillusioned criterion to the end-of-the-old order in European affairs World War I, alludes to the medieval Grail romances, specifically to a wounded or ailing Fisher King whose disability reduces his realm to wasteland. Eliot's poem ends with Prince Hamlet's line, "Shall I at least set my lands in order?"

Like other stories of Arthurian legend, the tale plays for a vision of a unified, stable trajectory...the same social order, of course, fleetingly present in Lear's beginning before the king's rash decision to parcel it out to his daughters leads to apocalyptic devastation.

The relevance, unfortunately, and all others in Eliot's entire oeuvre still over the heads of the largely student audience, many of whom laugh when the line "London Bridge is falling down falling down falling down" is recited.

Padilla's most telling gesture at this point has to do with the Irish quotation, "Dana. Bayadhoon. Banyans." Even though they are not rendered in English in Eliot's poem, Padilla supplies a translation for his audience..."Charity. Compassion. Control"—presumably in the redeeming sound from all the pain and addiction that have gone before.

Redemption

But [spoiler alert] Lear's not done yet. The Wasteland" ends with the words "Shantih. Shantih. Shantih," which Eliot (an Anglican, by the way, who nevertheless identified himself as "Anglo-Catholic") defines, by way of quoting the "Upanishads," as "The Peace which passeth understanding."

After the curtain rises this picture is absent, they begin singing—and here the audience is shocked!—it is quandary [sic] to years—"Leipzig. Leipzig." Padilla's point seems to be that "Hating Lear's" store of grand, betrayal, power, politics, opportunism and fatally-flawed is as present now in this country as it was in Lear's time. The music (by Jonas) fits hand and can read it to this just as much, but for citizens who are keen to be aware the return of this humanity and citizenship.

And then it is, the existential despair of "Lear" transposed into something more urgent and hopeful, the liberation passed by birth to a redemption of some kind. Taking its cue from Eliot's closing line, however, Padilla's re-imagining of this Shakespearean, solemn drama with intellectual aspirations, at yet level, is one also leaves one quite cold, baffled and annoyed.

Jing's "Hating Lear" runs every Friday (7 p.m.), Saturday and Sunday (10 a.m./3 p.m.) until March 4 at The Fine Theater Center. For ticket reservations, contact 7250264, 4340652-122, 0917-3583600, or jonathanlee@gmail.com, www.petatheater.com.

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'Battle Royale': Novel and film now a street play

By Walter Ang
Lead Buzz

KENT LANON Ensemble has collaborated with several Australian playwrights to develop a performance adaptation of "Battle Royale"—the controversial novel by Koushun Takami that spawned a movie version and a manga version.

"Battle Royale" is set in a dystopian Japan where a classroom of high school students is taken by a totalitarian government to an island and forced to kill each other until only one survives 72 hours. Everyone killed with an explosive collar until only one survives 72 hours. Everyone killed with an explosive collar until only one survives 72 hours.

The novel explores similar themes as Lord of the Flies. It's a sharp satire on society's need for increasingly visceral entertainment," says SLE artistic director JC Intal-Lee.

"The script has three different endings. Every show will have one of the three different endings, depending on what happens that night."

The "stage" version (the work is intended for on-site outdoor performances) titled "Battle Royale" will involve 40 actors. Robin Nevin will play the classroom's teacher.

Page to stage

Australia, who spent a year living in Japan, had taken courses to stage the material. When his group staged David Hare-gan's "To Hear You Up and God You Down" in Subpain Cafe, Malate, in 2009, he found out Intal-Lee had been working on an improv scenario based on the novel. Then began collaborating.

Last year, they included film makers Sara Berry-Perez and George McNulty, and writer Jordan Deveaux in a month-long collaborative devising process to finalize a script.

"David and Ilse other three playwrights came to Manila to see the show. Then we had a workshop with SLE to devise the scenes and script," says Intal-Lee. "They would set parameters, and actors would create the scene with those conditions. Then we re-edit accordingly."

Ensemble

Kent Lanon Ensemble work is "performance-based" workshop that highlights collaborative development and ensemble acting. The group usually performs in alternative or non-theater spaces like living rooms, parks, bars, bathrooms, etc.

They recently staged a Tagalog "pinoneer" translation of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet," retitled as "Ethel$ <3's Jhuli$." The production was performed in a hostage's community bathroom, and used delivery devices such as cup and flip-top, and had shows-opening that included hip-hop and kundiman.

Online and real world

For "Battle," Australia director Alex Isaac found Pandacotter for Project collaborators with Taiwan theater veteran of Ishmael Mendoza's "Boxaway") for the production's sound design.

SLE also plans on publishing an online database of characters and weapons. By the movie, the tools assigned to the students were lack of the dozen, some getting weapons such as a machine gun and some getting nothing. There was a paper fan.

After it premieres at the main driveway ramp of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, plans are underway for possible performances in one of the prison cells in Fort Santiago and a rendezvous in a yet-to-be-decided location. For certain productions and performances, the group announces their venues only a few hours prior to the show. Join online social networking accounts.

"Battle Royale" runs March 9-11 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. Call 0917-5860753, e-mail rjanlanon@asemble@gmail.com, or add the group's Facebook page.

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From petroglyphs to contemporary art, Rizal art fest an 'experience'

Text and photos by Lester Ballaran
Contributor

ANGONO, "Art Capital of the Philippines," Antipolo City and other Rizal towns hosted the Philippine Visual Arts Festival (PVAF), part of the National Arts Month celebration, last Feb. 17 to 21.

Dubbed as the Rizal Experience, PVAF sees different artists from all over the country gathering in Rizal province to showcase their talent and knowledge in visual arts and to strengthen the connection among visual artists in the Philippines.

PVAF not has an international dimension since the festival was attended by artists from China.

Satellite exhibits were also held at the Kinabuyan ng Sining, Rizal Park in Manila; Naga City, and Mandaluyong City's SM Megamall.

The festival is grounded on the theme of the National Arts Month, "Tradition and Innovation." It was organized by the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA).

An exhibition of different artworks by Filipino and Chinese delegates at SM City Taytay Event Center opened the festival on Feb. 17.

During the opening, winners of the nationwide art contest competition were announced.

Irish Galon of Bohol won first place for her piece, "Marriage Bed." Chanlle Chando's "Pitumbuge" and Khrize Bajenia's "Harvesting Highlanders" placed second and third, respectively.

The first day of the festival also inaugurated the "Una Imagines" exhibit that features artworks from the town's artists. The inauguration was followed by a cultural show by

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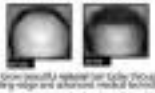

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Star-studded Cinema Rehiyon festival in Bacolod

Text and photos by Lester G. Ildefonso
Contributor

FOR ITS fourth year, Cinema Rehiyon, the non-competition film festival organized by the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA) during the Philippine Arts Festival (also known as the National Arts Month every February), included video installations along with the regular fare of full-length films and short films by regional filmmakers.

Since Bacolod City was the host, the festival was called "Bacolliwood." A total of 68 films were shown.

Among video installations shown were those by Martha Atienza, Kiri Dalena and Ruby Ibarolla.

Kiri's exhibit of seven video installations titled "Killing Time" was showcased at the Negros Museum.

Atienza's "Gulubong ug Abong Pisod sa Bagol" was shown at Gallery Orange of artist Charlie Co.

The installation was viewed through a three-channel video projection that took its audience above and below sea level.

The movie tackles the relationship between Filipinos and the sea. The documentary includes Filipino seamen working in international ships and ports.

"Cinema Rehiyon started with film and has now embraced video art," said fluently-voiced Cinema Rehiyon festival director Manny Montelibano. "It started in the movie house and is now an alternative probe. It's risque in the barangays through Cine de Barrio."

This year, the venue for viewing some of the featured films were not only confined to the movie house. Obviously frustrated but also included public areas such as art galleries and bar stages.

Cine de Barrio, for example, transformed several barangay centers in Bacolod as film-screening venues.

STEPP and delegates of Cinema Rehiyon 2012

BACOLOD Streetdance performers during the opening of Cinema Rehiyon 2012.

FESTIVAL director Manny Montelibano

NCCA-Cinema committee

DIRECTOR Peque Gallaga with filmmakers from Bacolod

Forums

Veteran directors Lino del Castillo and Peque Gallaga were the featured speakers in the special program on film matters.

Gallaga, who worked in mainstream and independent films, said independent films give filmmakers full artistic control.

"On indie films, you tell your story without anybody telling control of what will it look like," he explained.

Meanwhile, Castillo reminded filmmakers they should know their viewers and said that a film is worthless if an audience does not see it.

"Films should be watched by the people. They are not made to be kept and hidden, they are meant to be shown," he said.

Actors John Arcen, Bet Cortez, Cherrie Gil, Mark Gil, Ronnie Lazaro, Joel Torre and Epi Quizon also graced the festival and took part in a forum about actors in cinema.

Torre said most actors find irresponsible directors their pet peeves.

"We, as professional actors, do our homework (before going to a scene). We accept that the directors also come prepared," he said.

Quizon advised the directors who are new to their craft not to be intimidated with veteran actors.

"(Directors) must always take control especially when directing (how kind of actors, "he said. "If you'll not step up and give us to your instructions, the actors will surely take control of your film."

Oldest Filipino movie

In Bacolod's Art District, the silent film "Bridges of Sighs" was shown. It was accompanied by a live audio performance by theatrical musicians.

The 1914 movie was recently discovered and it tells the tragic story of forbidden love, similar to Flaherty and Murnau's classic but silent movie, "Tabu."

According to Soldy Co, Cinema Rehiyon's curator for Lanao, "Bridges of Sighs" "may probably be the oldest existing Filipino film."

THOMAS Horn as Oskar in "Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close"

FROM BOOK TO FILM

Poignant 9/11 novel reaches the screen

ONE OF the most definitive novels about 9/11 literature one of the year's most cathartic cinematic experiences as Warner Bros. brings to the screen "Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close," starring Tom Hanks and Sandra Bullock.

Directed by Stephen Daldry ("The Reader," "The Hours"), the film has been nominated for Best Picture at this year's academy Awards.

In 2005, novelist Jonathan Safran Foer, renowned for his blend of meticulous comedy and tragedy in his debut novel, "Everything Is Illuminated," published his follow-up, "Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close." His second novel was, on the one hand, the gripping story of an unusually precocious and sensitive boy who invents fantastical devices, theories about astrophysics, collects a vast assortment of random facts—and is compelled into a quixotic odyssey through the fabric of New York. At the same time, the novel was the first major literary exploration into the grief of 9/11 families, and a study of how a child's imagination helps him navigate overwhelming fear and unfathomable loss.

Subjective

When Daldy read the book, he was struck most of all by Oskar's subjective point of view. An unusual child with astonishingly high intelligence, eccentric and obsessive behaviors that might put him on the autistic spectrum, Oskar describes the world around him with his own particular mix of naiveté and insight, nervousness and boldness, incomprehension and a need to understand.

Most of all, Daldy was intrigued by how this POV, just like a child's imagination, combined random thoughts, flashes of memory, bits of ideas and half-impressions formless with pure emotion—all at a moment when life has irrevocably changed for Oskar's family and the world around him.

The book tocus many themes—of individual and national trauma, of childhood's strategems, of the nature of tragedy and the endurance of love through family hardship—into its tapestry. Each of these themes was key to the storytelling, but Safe found his way in through one particular element: the relationship between Oskar and his father, Thomas (Hanks), who is seen in the film entirely through Oskar's subjective memories, which are, in turn, fueled by a confusing mixture of love, loss and lingering questions.

'Black'

Oskar deeply misses his father's storytelling "extraordinary expeditions," clever puzzles that Thomas created for Oskar to solve, not only as inspired father-son games but also to

CONTINUED ON

ARTISTS NiDela Cruz and Al Perez, Tadeo artist and model in "Pahiyaglyphs" tattoo competition; Mindanao delegate in interactive mural painting

From petroglyphs to contemporary art, Rizal art fest an 'experience'

From page E1

the punch of impact.

Meanwhile, those who would like to develop their skills can still avail a chance in several art workshops held at the Bonifacio Ancestral in Angono and at the Old Cogeo Eyeing.

Human statuary were also present on the festival as tattoo artists joined the tattoo competition, "Pahiyaglyphs."

An interactive mural painting was also prepared to strengthen the camaraderie and ties among the visual artists of the country and to create friendship with the delegates of China.

The UP Artists' Circle Alumni took part in the celebration with the opening of its 40th anniversary exhibit, "In Circle" last Feb. 16. The exhibit is showcased in Finns Art Gallery in Intramuros and will run until March 18.

The artists and delegates also visited Antipolo City's Cloud 9, which has a gallery and exhibit of arts and crafts.

On Feb. 19, presidential candidate Bailey Agabas honored the conference component of the festival.

She also received the painting by Nonoy Avila, head of the NCCA National Committee on the Visual Arts, titled "Human Caroline." The gift is for Pres. dent Aquino. It shows a scene of ordinary area in town, reminding the focus of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos, during the Edsa revolution of 1986.

The painting will be hung at the Malacañang Cory Memorial Museum in Tarlac.

ARTISTS Egina Reyes and Danilo Pangan

NCCA Chairman Felipe de Leon receives a gift from the Chinese delegates.

BAILEY Aquino

HERNANDA giving his painting for President Aquino to president-to-be Bailey

Other activities of the PAFI Fest included trade art sketching sessions on the open landscape and tattoo painting, among others.

Prominent artists Raul Isidro and Fil Delia Cruz took part in the trade sketching session.

An in the province of Rizal can be traced back 3,000 years ago through the petroglyphs found on its caves. The cave drawings were discovered by the late National Artist for the Visual Arts Carlos "Botong" Francisco.

Aside from Francisco, another Angono native was the late National Artist for Music Lucio D. San Pedro.

Nowadays is also a native of Angono where he has an earlier and the Angono, which holds art workshops and hosts artists.

The NCCA event was in cooperation with the Rizal Provincial Government, History International Dantes Silang, and Thunderbird Resorts.

Gladiola Bautista Ynares, wife of Rizal Gov. Jun Ynares, acted as PAFI hostess. Angono mayor Bernardo was festival director.

Other collaborators were publishes of Angono, Antipolo, Binangonan, Pateros and Taytay.

Mayor Gwendo Calderon of Angono said he is committed to making the boundless municipality truly a showcase of arts and crafts.

Most the who were born, grew, and raised in Angono are known as artists.

REGIONAL artists collaborate in an interactive mural painting

YOUNG artist Daniel Nori in his art gallery at Cloud 9 in Antipolo

HERNANDA dances with Ramon Culi

Installations at West

INSTALLATIONS by Jon Cuyson, Kaka Stables, Pete Bacolod and Lang Quicumbing-Tiamzon are exhibited in West Gallery (West Section, Cubao, 4F West Annex, Session 1, tel. 411-0556 or 411-9021; visit www.westgallery.org) until March 9. Cuyson's "Department of Everyday Protocols: Dream Sequence, Scene #5," is in Gallery 1. It presents the city "as a resource of latent narratives, private stories, dreams, and desires in the process of interaction and speculation." The exhibit scans the 1962 French crime film, "La Sarmeuse," by French filmmaker, Jean-Pierre Melville, as the conceptual engine for the development of the "scene."

In Gallery 2 is Stables' "The Image of Sound." The fifth offering of Got Frame Video Art Project 1 of the non-profit organization Visual Pond Art Initiatives at Co-m.ercial Inn-3. The exhibit focuses on the significance of sound to video and television, which, as moving images, have been more dominantly associated with visuals and the art of looking, seeing, and watching.

In Gallery 3, Bacolod gathers and re-assembles discarded materials from an artist's studio to come up with "Leanings." The artist gives viewers a glimpse into the inner workings of these familiar assistive materials, as well as into Bacolod's frame of mind as he builds and rebuilds these objects not just as instruments in the creative process but as the visual point of his works.

In Gallery 4, "Brain Debris" reflects Bandon's penchant for pulling together objects whose primary functions have seemingly ceased, but kept for pure and priceless sentimental value.

BY FELIX Bacolod

BY JON Cuyson

BY LANG Quicumbing-Tiamzon

Kenreich in Iloilo

"Revolution Revisited: A Photography Exhibition" by Ken Kenreich is on view in Museo Iloilo (Bonifacio Drive, Iloilo City; email museum_museoniloilo@yahoo.com.ph) until Feb. 29. It features photographs of prominent personalities of the Edsa Revolution.

Tan at Greenbelt

"Spirit," an exhibition of the works of Katrina Bee Tan runs until Feb. 29 in the Green Loft 3 Gallery (Ayala Center, Makati).

BY KATRINA Bee Tan

Visual Arts

Ranela in Bulacan

Book illustrator and art instructor Jose Ballesteros' "Jonathan" S. Rafols presents "Fragments" in Galleria Guillermo Tolentino (Tolentino Building, Malolos, Bulacan; tel. 0921-7913852; 0905-3559635). It opens on March 2 and runs until March 28. The artist will showcase a series of contemporary religious iconographic images that focuses on interaction and his obsession with lines and points. Materials used are paint, paper, found objects, personal memorabilia to produce two- dimensional artworks and installation art.

BY JUAN C. Rafols

"FREEDOM" by Jose Joya

Joya retrospective at UP

The retrospective exhibit "Jose Joya: Scholar, Artist and Mentor" runs until Feb. 29 in Balangan ng Bangal (UP Diliman, QC). It celebrates the life of National Artist for Visual Arts Jose Joya, and his contribution to the art and academe. The exhibit features over 70 works of the artist known as the "prophet avatar of Expressionism" and is mounted to celebrate his 80th birth anniversary. It is presented by Joya family, UP College of Fine Arts, Office of Initiatives for the Culture and the Arts. It is curated by Rubini David Delfino, assisted by May Lyn Cruz.

Napay, Pasilan at Art Verite

"Night and Day," a two-man show by artists Dolly Napay and Neil Pasilan, will be shown March 1-15, in Art Verite Gallery (Unit 2C-3D, 2F Shops, Serendra, Fort Bonifacio Global Tagaig, tel. 09151235215, 0921-5988160, 9153882, http://artverite.com). It shows the artists new paintings rendered in acrylic and oil on canvas, wood, and wood which depict fleeting and haunting impressions of rural scenes, where the mundane becomes mystical. The exhibit's centerpiece is a diptych or work of the same title, which the dynamics of cooperation between these two artists and the dichotomies that exists depict night and day, darkness and light, permanence and transience.

"NIGHT and Day" by Dolly Napay and Neil Pasilan

Sumalong at Vargas Museum

"Revisiting Modernity: Architecture and the New Society" is a double exhibition featuring photographs of Lawrence Cleon Sumalong and the archival collection of the Centro ng Arkitekturang Filipino that explores the causes and architecture created in the 1970s during the Ferdinand Marcos period. It is on-going in the Vargas Museum (University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City; http://vargasmuseum.upd.edu.ph). The exhibition is part of the Philippines Arts Festival, a month-long festival of the arts spearheaded by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts in celebration of the National Arts Month.

2012 Taboan writers fest: Is literature alive and well?

By Armado Mo. Guerrero
Core Buster

LITERATURE IS the most intellectual of the arts, for which reason it is also the least appealing as far as the public-at-large is concerned.

You can make a social occasion out of a book launch or poetry reading but literature is a solitary art. In the final analysis (or "at the end of the day") it is best engaged in the comfort of your easy chair, a book before you, communicating with a great novelist or poet.

Thus, literature (especially in the Philippines) often needs a shot in the arm to make it more visible.

Screenwriter-turned-novelist Ricky Lee has done that, to an extent, with his well-publicized book launches, thanks to his dozen-biz friends.

The Cultural Center of the Philippines has its Literature Division, and the Philippine Center for International PEN its regional workshops for teachers of literature.

And then there's the National Commission on Culture & the Arts (NCCA), with its "Taboan: Philippine Writers Festival," the most recent of which was held at the Clark Freeport Zone, Pampanga. (Taboan is a Tagalog word meaning "marketplace," in this case, of ideas.)

The three-day gathering brought together writers from many parts of the country, scholars, teachers, students and readers. There were parallel sessions on storied themes such as the craft of writing, Filipino aesthetics, history, science, the environment.

The main speakers were three National Artists for Literature: novelist F. Sionil Jose, playwright-essayist Bienvenido Lumbera and poet Virgilio Almario (Rio Alma).

Almario spoke on Rizal and the Filipino imagination, and made a pitch for Bonifacio, who was also a romantic (nobleman) and who is at a disadvantage because not much is known about him. Also, Almario indicated, Bonifacio did not have the benefit of a phalanx of eminent translators.

Speaking with his usual candor, Jose said the organizers had "no imagination" because they did not discuss such topics as justice, corruption, patriotism and literature, and how artists can fortify society. The topics for discussion were "divisive."

"We are shallow, malabsan nag kalapitan kay," he declared. "We are in a world of rapid nations. This is a challenge all writers must face."

Also true to form, Lumbera adopted a safer, scholarly approach to the topic "deliberately" assigned to him—Critical Latest Literature. He cited the history of rebellion in the region, from the Babylonians to the Huks, the tenancy system, and the early activist poetry of Benigno Ramos and Rio Alma.

During the parallel sessions, in the wake of opinions, dissertations, experiences reconciled, resolutions, questions and answers, and points raised, some stood out:

- Writers need fight for their rights.
- If you can motivate your students to read, you are halfway there.
- A writer will always have his opinion, if you can write you can do anything.
- The short story is still important. It is an historical record. Now stories (north of Manila) are being written on urban-rural tension.
- Writing is more fun in the Philippines.

Which brings us back to our original concerns. Is literature (in the Philippines and the rest of the world) alive and well?

Well, not-that-well frankly (pardon the pun), but it is still around. Think of great writers like Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Salman Rushdie, John Irving, et. al.). And it will always be around as long as there are book lovers who go for the novel, short story, play and the critical or personal essay.

NATIONAL Artist for Literature Bienvenido Lumbera talks about protest and resistance in his literature at Central Luzon, while F. Sionil Jose foretells the death of native languages.

NDA Rivera Ford, Christine Godinez-Ortega and Eva Cancilloni lead the session on writers' workshops.

SEVERAL publishing houses participated in a small book fair during the conference.

THE TABOAN. Philippine Writers Festival is capped by a closing ceremony and the beckoning of the Taboan Awards for writers in Luzon for their outstanding contributions led by Priscilla Macaraeg-Lee, head of the NCCA National Committee on Literary Arts, and John Mallari, festival director. Awardees are Jose Bragas-Lacuesta (Luzon 2F. Hidalgo (Northern Luzon), Lilia Bautista and Bonifacio Gomez (Southern Luzon), Tau Antonio and Rogelio Pangalian (Central Luzon), and Rodolfo Lazarana and Quercelin Fernandez (Pampanga).

NATIONAL Artists for Literature Bienvenido Lumbera, Virgilio Almario and F. Sionil Jose serve as keynote speakers.

IN THE session "Traditional Taxes in Contemporary Times," panelists include Michael Coroza, Mac Tiongco and Dante Mendoza. It is moderated by Priscilla Macaraeg-Lee, head of the NCCA National Committee on Literary Arts.

VANESSA Doctor, Charlson Ong, Jean Aruscion, Nick Pichay and Butch Bulosan as panelists for the session on writing as a profession.

THE SECOND-DAY plenary session in the Ramones of Central Luzon.

Poignant 9/11 novel reaches the screen

From page B3

help him engage with the world despite his social awkwardness. So when he finds the mysterious key in the bottom of a vase hidden in the dark recesses of his father's closet, Oskar propels himself into a new mission to investigate the key's meaning.

He only has to do the key's potential origins in the name "Black," written on the envelope in which he found it, so Oskar doubtfully makes an ambitious plan to visit all 472 people named Black in the New York City phone books, even though, according to the math, it will take him three years to do so.

"Oskar is a kid who is different, but in a wonderful way," notes Roth. "He might have a form of Asperger's but he also has a great imagination and a real sense of adventure along with his many fears. For a long time, he was kept afloat very much by his father who enjoyed so many similar things. So now, when Oskar finds his father's key a year after his death, he believes it has to unlock something—a piece of advice, an object, some wisdom that his father left for him. And it leads him on an adventure that is his way of coming to terms with grief and all sorts of other things."

As Roth began composing Foer's wide-ranging plot and finding the cinematic structure, his friend Foer to be a supportive resource.

Gabby says: "Jonathan really understands the difference between a book and a script, and was very helpful. He never once uttered the phrase, 'Well, in the book...' He was always open to interpretation and extrapolation."

"Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close" opens exclusively Feb. 29.

ENTERTAINMENT

Lito Zulueta

Fil-Am in 'Idol' Top 24

ANI ORTIZ, favorite in the San Diego auditions, Filipino-Mexican-American Jessica Sanchez is in the Top 24 of the reality show "American Idol." Sanchez, 16, caught attention at age 12, when she joined "America's Got Talent." "One of the judges, singer Brandy, predicted that she'd be a big star. ... Beyond that, I hope..."

Quest for excellence at the 84th Oscars

But where are you, Michael Fassbender, Ryan Gosling, Tilda Swinton and Leo DiCaprio?

RYAN Gosling in "Ides of March"

By Constantine C. Tejero

TODAY'S 84TH Annual Academy Awards should be another pleasurable fast hours of waiting for that seal of excellence to be handed out by 6,000 academy members. Every year, everyone in the movie industry who takes the craft seriously strives to snag that 8.5-lb Oscar pinnacle of 60-percent tin, plated with 24k hand-gold.

Striving for excellence is as often impossible task. If you're a filmmaker, you're measured against the likes of Bergman, Ozu, Truffaut, Antonioni, Dreyer, Bufuel and the rest of the Illustrious gang.

The academy's avowed intent is to reward for excellence in the cinematic art. But the more perceptive know that, over the or not, one could get an Oscar if he/she has made some earth-shaking noise. So it's open season, especially nowadays when any pretentious who-ass world's digicam can become a filmmaker.

Some critics call 2011 the Year of the Auteur, or the Year of the Art Film—when young and old masters of world cinema came out of the woodwork with their latest exports: Jean-Luc Godard, Terrence Malick, Roman Polanski, Manoel de Oliveira, Woody Allen, Lars von Trier, Pedro Almodóvar, Martin Scorsese, Steven Spielberg, Eric von Sant, Aki Kaurismäki, Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne, Paolo and Vittorio Taviani, Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Béla Tarr, Lynne Ramsay, David Cronenberg, Steven Soderbergh, Kenneth Lonergan, Julie Dash, Aki Kaurismäki, Abbas Kiarostami, Ole Bolthrun, Werner Herzog, Roland Joffé, Takeshi Kitano, Hanif Kureishi, Mike Leigh, Terrence Malick, Hanif Kureishi, Olle Solstrom, Werner Herzog, Roland Joffé, Takeshi Kitano, Hanif Kureishi.

Our own filmmakers must contend with these masters. While other countries send for consideration for Best Foreign Language Films such luminary of cinema proportions as "Kanya" and "Exambre," what do we send year after year? (Not to denigrate our entries, but we're talking of world cinema here, not regional theatre.)

Snubs, surprises

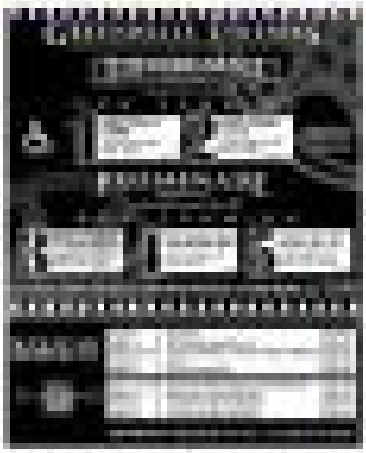
As in years past, this year's Oscar announcements are characterized by snubs and surprises. Too numerous to mention are films and performances that the academy has cruelly ignored.

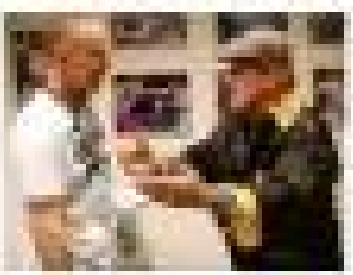
Those to be nominated for Best Motion Picture are: "The Artist," "Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close" by Stephen Daldry; "The Help" by Tate Taylor; "Hugo" by Scorsese; "Midnight in Paris" by Allen; "Moneyball" by Bennett Miller; "The Tree of Life" by Malick; "War Horse" by Spielberg.

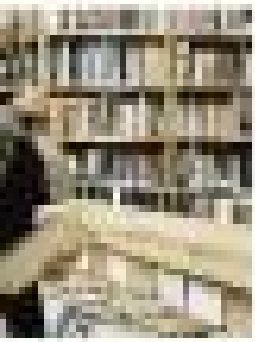
Two noteworthy biopics were released last year: (Phyllida Lloyd's "The Iron Lady" a convoluted portrayal of the life and times of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher from girlhood

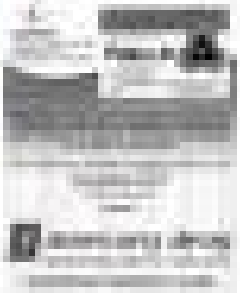
(more)

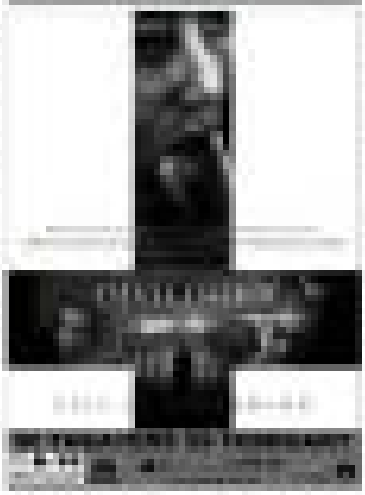
Quest for excellence in 84th Oscars











Confessions of an action man

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Anne Carvajal

CESAR MONTANO is out to lure back the audience to screen films via "Hiwatan." Helmed, directed and co-produced by Rodney himself, the fast-paced film is about seven men out to avenge the death of his family from his own handlers.

Montano won't feel disadvantaged because Rodney did not scrimp on his movie's production value. You can say that it's his own mansion, credited with his blood, sweat and tears. The best is on to "Hiwatan"!

Let me sink-in-one with Rodney on the

What makes "Hiwatan" different from all the action movies you've made?

"Hiwatan" is the first full-length action movie that Phillip Salvador and I made together. It's my first time to be teamed up with Sam Pinto. It's also the first movie that casts me with my son Diego

CESAR Montano

The film depicts what happens in two days, with outstanding performances from Ricky Davao, Mark Herras, John Wayne and Rommel Montano.

What was it like working with Ipe?

Ayos lpe was kind enough to give us on-the-spot acting workshop to all his co-stars. He and Ricky Davao were always coaxing each other: Ipe wanted to call Ricky *Kayo*, being his older brother in the movie. Ricky objected, saying he looks a lot younger. Ipe shrugged.

Didn't Shiela get jealous of Sam?

Shiela didn't get jealous. Over the years she has grown like I never expected [she would].

What advice did you give Diego about show biz and girls?

I told Diego that if he really wants to make acting his profession, he'd better join stage plays, read more books about acting and watch good movies. I gave him a to-do list, no list girls, until we enjoying dalawa-t'yaan.

What is your biggest achievement?

My children. Pictures show, my achievements would mean nothing because I have nobody to share them with.

What's the most memorable trip you've had with your family?

Our trip to the United States last Christmas. We didn't bring a single gun because I believe we needed to bond more as a whole—just us. Others than trips, we become closer and happier as family.

What legacy would you like to leave behind?

I think I have to let my kids decide. Honestly, when it comes to my profession as an actor-filmmaker, I have a lot of growing up to do. There is so much that I still want to accomplish.

What's the best part about being Cesar Montano?

I enjoy doing the things that I do—writing scripts, composing songs, painting, running and working out, being a father—with passion. I thank God for the wisdom.

What's the toughest part about being Cesar Montano?

The toughest part is, I have to do all these things every day.

What is the secret to your sex appeal?

I think it's my wife. Because every time I ask her, "Do I look sexy?" she would answer, "Oozing with sex appeal, hubs!" I've realized she's taking me for a ride so she can go on a shopping spree.

What's the most important lesson you've learned as a husband and father?

Being a father is a very tough task but when your kids hug and kiss you, all the stress and exhaustion vanish. Being a husband is a difficult task, too, but when your wife hugs and kisses you, you feel unchanged. But always check if your wallet is still there. Joke-long-joke.

Would you say you have already mellowed?

I should say so. But that doesn't mean I don't know how to have fun anymore.

E-mail watsinglu@abanglingkod@yahoo.com

ENTERTAINMENT Living Stars
Editor Bonnie D. Velarde

Defending P-Noy

GRACE Lee defends P-Noy against critics on "Startalk Live": "Nakaka-galit 'pag ... sinasabuyan ang mga taong inaparisan sa kabaya mo. I know he's a very strong person and that, pra sa akin (though it, and at the end of the day I know magkakaayos) Even."

HEARD

Chowking at it's Halo-Halo
Umaraw o bumagyo, ang Summer laging sa 'yo!
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Marvin's rooms

HOME BODY

IKEA LIVING room, with gray walls, showcases furniture by Lojing, Colocopus and Klak.

Actor-restaurateur has built an urban sanctuary that is also a virtual art gallery

MUSEUM lamp and dining set by Kenneth Cobonpue

By Krystol Sun Diego Jr.
Photos by Alanah Torralba

LIKE most multi-hyphenates, actor-TV producer-restaurateur-concert promoter Marvin Agustin follows a stressful daily schedule.

He's often rushing from one meeting to another—juggling office duties in his two companies, Entertainment (for concerts) and Mediaburian (for TV production and artist management); shooting a movie ("Moron 5 and the Crying Lady" with Vhong Navarro) or a TV commercial (Boost, Cobra); and running 17 (and counting) restaurants all over the country.

Whew.

But at home, Marvin gets to slow down and relish life's little pleasures.

"I love to work, but it's important to have balance in your life," Marvin says. "I read books. I cook. I eat. I swim with the kids."

And he abides by a strict never-on-Sunday rule. He usually spends weekends with his twin sons Sebastian and Santiago, now 6-and-a-half years old.

Most the boys dazzle brunette dentist mother Iryn Uy and Marvin's homes, he makes sure to spend quality time with them when they're with him.

He considers himself a "fun" dad, approachable and yet strict. "I hope to instill in them the right values," he says.

"But early, he has started teaching the boys the value of hard-earned money and the virtues of industry, discipline and enterprise.

When Sebastian wanted to buy a second hand toy from a garage sale, Marvin casually instructed the boy, "Haggle. Try to get a better price."

Mano Tresos raises the obvious. Marvin is "teaching (organized) at studying (bookworking)."

He confesses: "I can be multiple (fidelity). I always want to know where my money goes. I come from very humble beginnings. I know that it's hard to be hard-up. Now that my family is living comfortably, I appreciate my earnings more."

But a penny pincher he's not. "Money shouldn't be one's driving force; it won't make you happy in the end," he says. "It's all about balance."

Health buff's haven

Marvin's home, which stands on a 700-sq m property, allows him to find peace in the heart of a bustling city.

"It's my sanctuary," he says. "The location is perfect. Since it's in the periphery of the subdivision, we don't hear the honking cars on the highway. It's like being in a resort."

The whole village is a haven for this health buff. "My trainer drops by three to four times a week. I once secured the village and then go on rejuvenating running. I have a gym buff at home," he says.

DURING parties, he attends the stove-out to the poolside and cooks for his guests.

After competing in Thailand and Russia, Marvin took a break from archery. "The sport taught me that you have to work hard if you want to achieve anything of real value. There are no shortcuts. You need a good foundation, if you want to succeed in any endeavor."

Archery also improved his focus and patience, he points out....certainly valuable tools for an actor. He plans to switch to tennis.

Open spaces

From a condo unit, he moved here five years ago. A new dad at the time, he decided that a cramped bachelor's pad in a high-rise wasn't kid-friendly.

He went looking for a house with a pool and garden, and plenty of open spaces for the twins to run around in, and found the bungalow. "I had the garden uprooted up and the swimming pool renovated," he recounts.

He describes the house's design aesthetic as "old meets new." He explains: "I modernized the 1970s look of the ceiling and the marble floors, then added a few modern pieces and lots of artwork."

Furniture by Rudy Layug, Klak and Kenneth Cobonpue highlight the minimalist attitude; paintings by Orob Obando, Ofan Serrano, Martin Custan, Emmanuel Garibay, among others, adorn the walls.

Yes, the gray walls ... Marvin is proud of this design idea. "While researching in Paris, I stumbled upon a quaint shop with gray walls," he recalls. "I so loved the color that I took a picture and copied it for the house. This particular shade of gray makes the paintings pop out."

His friends guarded him into starting this now impressive collection of paintings; his numerous travels continue to fuel his passion for art.

"I've been to the Louvre in Paris and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, but my favorite is the Tate Modern in London. I'm partial to contemporary art. I plan to go back to England just for that," he says.

Foodie family

Traveling with the boys is a favorite bonding activity. He makes it a point to expose his sons to art, as well as to exotic cuisine. "They've learned to eat sushi and sashimi. They can't love fried chicken all the time. When we dine out, they need try a new dish," Marvin says.

Most weekends, he whips up special

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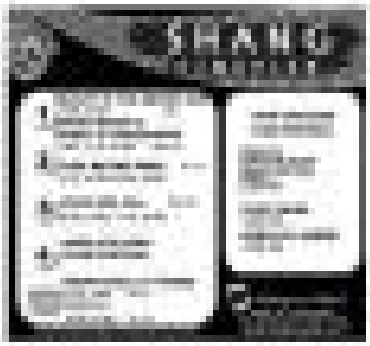
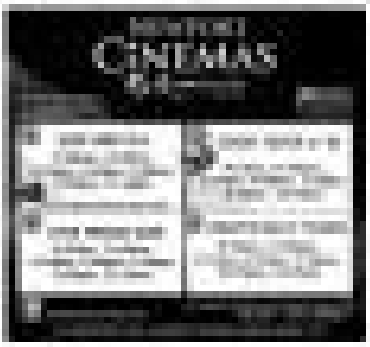
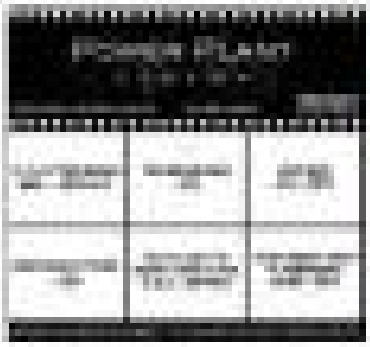


Ode to Joy

Friends, colleagues gather to support retired newsman



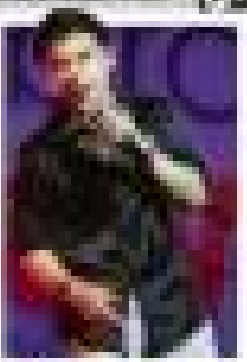


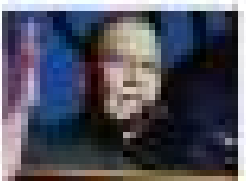
MOVIE TIME

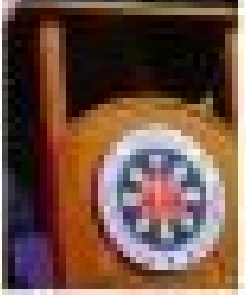
MOVIE SPECIAL

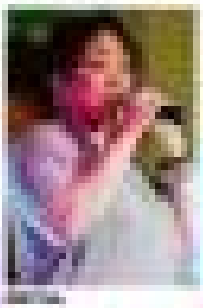
MALL EVENTS

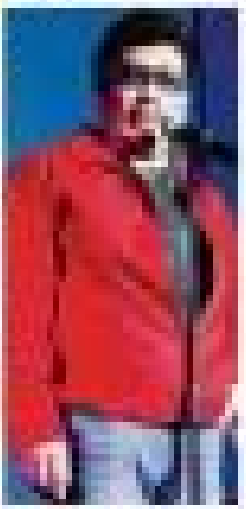
MALL SPECIAL

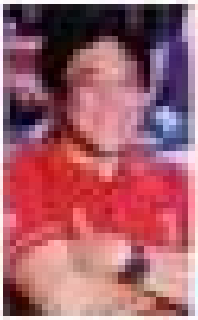


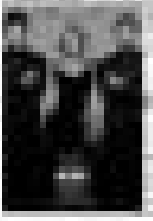












MOVIE WORLD
LORAX
MEET

Marvin's rooms

dishes for the family: "I empty the contents of the refrigerator and cook outside."

Like most Filipinos, he's into "touch" dishes. "I get that from my dad Danilo who loves sisig, adobong, nilaga, menudo ..."

Marvin, a product of the International School for Culinary Arts and Hotel Management, is indeed a whiz in the kitchen making him a perfect fit for Room Culture' latest campaign.

Only a little over 200 food experts in the world are permitted to enter the Room's chef's uniform. Marvin, who first worked as a waiter at Tin Manis, now heads a thriving restaurant business: Sierra Suit, John and Yoko, Mr. Bonnaire, Mundanos, Johnny Chow, Bernard, Bohemian and Oyster Bay.

"We're franchising now. We just opened Kuma Sam branches in Cebu and Davao," he says.

Dream kitchen

His present kitchen is not his ideal work station, though.

Construction is set up the area in the garden—for reasons, as his birthday bash coincides. 29.)

The dream kitchen is under construction in another part of Quezon City, except that he's planning to sell that property. "I don't want to live there. It's too far and the traffic-Antipolo is awful," he says.

And that's another positive career for Marvin—builder and seller of homes. His mom says he is a natural at interior design. "He likes fixing the house; he gets ideas from books and magazines."

Displayed in the living room are two coffee-table books: "25 Inspired Houses in the Philippines" and "New Sizes and Dimensions."

His well-appointed residence is a testament to his hard work. Before show biz knocked, while he working as waiter at Tin Manis, Marvin was also a staffer at the ADA Video and a manager at Shakey's Pizza.

"My sister somehow convinced me to sign up as a manager," he remembers. "I was paid P350 for playing Captain Shakey's."

It wasn't a walk in the park. "It was hot inside that costume. The hardest part was when sweat dripped into your eyes. It was so painful, it would make a grown man cry," he recounts.

Emotional launch

Marvin remembers living in a 20 sq m space when he was small (younger. "That was in Mountaintop, so I often applied for jobs in establishments at the Alabang Town Center," he says. Then, when his folks said Yoko restaurant broke ground at the Alabang mall, he got emotional.

He has expanded his entertainment enterprises, too.

After wrapping up work on the GMA 7 series "Eglet," Marvin opted to go freelance.

His own company, Media-Tonics, now manages his career, with the help of former line Sweetie host Annabelle Rogadio. Also happens to sing a Mediatonics talent, Marvin reports.

After only a year, Perezmarvin has amassed a string of high-profile concerts, headlined by international stars Bimbo Marx, Marvin S. 58 Records to Mars, Black Eyed Peas and Miley Cyrus.

"It's fun and fulfilling," Marvin says of his role as concert impresario. "There are a lot of struggles, but seeing the fans and hearing their cheers an opening night make it all worthwhile."

Previously because of his success in the biz, he wants to act as godfather to promising performers, through the new TV5 talent show he is producing, "Kanta Pilipinas."

"The theme song was sung by Lea Salonga. (It's a list of reality shows like American Idol' and 'The Voice,'" he says. "It's not just another show his project for me. I want to encourage aspiring artists to fulfill their dreams because a lot of mentors helped me when I started."

To celebrate his birthday last month, he threw a party at the amusement park Enchanted Kingdom for young beneficiaries of his partnership with Operation Smile.

"We had a day of fun and games," he says. "I prepared chicken noodle soup for them." His own animal fun.

"Before their cleft-palate surgeries, my wards had really low self-esteem," says Marvin. "But that day they were grinning and giggling all the time."

That made Marvin smile all day, too.

GARDEN set is perfect for summer parties.

CHEERY sun decor at the patio.

COZY breakfast nook right outside his bedroom.

MEMORIZING accent piece adhered to the "old meets new" theme.

ARCHERY caught him discipline and perseverance.

BOW AND arrow in the library.

CENTERPIECE in the library is by Alvin Villareal.

PROUD home owner at the main entrance to his home, which combines old and new.

HIGH-TECH Bushnell telescope stands beside wood and glass accent piece.

MUSICAL wall art by Chris Ortiveza

"GABRIELA Silang" by Emmanuel Garibay

HE LIKES modern paintings like this piece by Andres Barrioquinto.

CLASSIC mother-and-child by Dan Ventura.

HIGH TEREZA says his son has lots of room design ideas.

SHELF filled with self-help and business books in the library

The New Jollibee Chicken and Mushroom Pasta: a must-try for pasta lovers

When it comes to "merit", a person's list can go on and on—from must-visit destinations, to must-have gadgets and must-experience activities. With countless new things to try and potential favorites to discover, being open to try new things is definitely a must. For pasta lovers, Jollibee is offering something new to add to their list of must-try treats — the New Jollibee Chicken and Mushroom Pasta.

Jollibee's New Chicken and Mushroom Pasta has a special flavorful sauce made with generous portions of real ground chicken meat, sliced mushrooms, combined with a special blend of tomatoes, herbs, and spices.

Looking for something new and delicious to eat? Make saving out with your officemates uniquely savory and head to Jollibee for this flavorful treat. The Chicken and Mushroom Pasta puts in the right amount of herbs and spices that is sure to land on each of your friends' list of must-try dishes.

The New Jollibee Chicken and Mushroom Pasta is available for only P55 (solo) and P75 with regular drink. Relish this sweet-and favorite with one-piece Chickenjoy or one-piece Chicken Barbecue Value Meal for P120.

Add something new and savory to your list of favorites by trying out the New Jollibee Chicken and Mushroom Pasta. It's one meal, try club that is bound to be an all-time favorite. The new Jollibee Chicken and Mushroom Pasta is available for dine-in, take-out, both orders, and drive thru. For delivery, call 8-7000 Jollibee Express Delivery or log on to www.jollibeedelivery.com.

LEARNING
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Graduation ball: Are you ready?! H6

How to teach English

Advice from near and far

"HELP! *Her college students don't know their grammar!*" a plea from college English teacher Sandra Aljuyos. *Teknika* (PDI 8th, 2012), elicited tips and suggestions from readers, many of whom are teachers. Here's a sampling:

Sylvia M. Ventura
Professor Emeritus
Dept. of English & Comparative Literature
University of the Philippines, Diliman

IN THE first place, the expression is "Order family way" not "Off the family way." In the second place, the correct word to use is "pregnant." Nobody uses "the family way" phrase anymore.

Nicanor Leguete Guinto
Faculty, Dept. of Languages , Literature and Humanities
Southeast Luzon State University
Lucban, Quezon

THE PLIGHT of De Talentoso is pretty much the same as what professors in the dying profession are experiencing.

In the first place, the country has no consistent policy on English language education or in the mass basic sense.

Maheswary Das
Teacher and author, English as a Second Language (Malaysia)

THE GRAMMAR rules of the English language, like those of other languages, can be learned and understood. Students have no problem complying written exercises on the present tense, prepositions and conjunctions, just to name a few. Issue now

Johanna Rose D. Bribe
Bachelor of Science (English)

I DO not think it was fun of you to assume that the causes behind your students' poor grammar skills was their public high school education.

Jose Valenzuela
English lecturer, bandmaster and emcee

MY READING of your piece tells me what you do is teaching—not called cheating, a sentence speaker uses said. It happens when an assumes we know what to teach and how to go about the topic.

Anthony Eric S. Sese
Currently employed in the IT industry

FIRST of all, I'd like to say I feel your pain.

From the time I graduated in 1992 (Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, Ateneo de Manila University), I have slowly but surely witnessed the deterioration of the English-speaking skills of Filipinos.

Anne H. (aka Mrs. English)
URL: http://www.mrs-english.com

YOUR article made me smile, as I can do/read your comments vividly.

For many years now, I've encountered students who share your frustrations: struggling to engage pupils in

Name withheld upon request

I CAN relate to so many levels to De Talentoso's, as I am a native to elementary grade students and have seen enough of their need, parochial level issues and compositions to know that what you are lamenting is indeed a real problem.

Richard Kesler
Workplace Writing Seminar Speaker-Facilitator

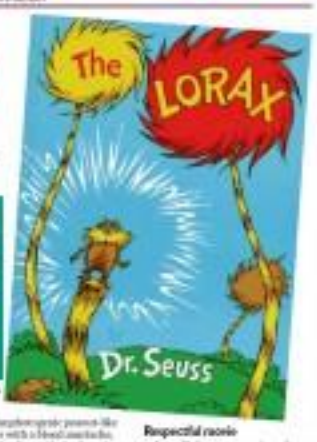
NOMADS using PowerPoint might help in teaching English to students. Also, using lots of materials tailored to the students' settings might help. Adding them to read in the classroom is another option, and rewarding too many lecturers while using practical approaches to inspire them to like learning English might help.

Unless

By Chelo Bacod-Formoso

WHEN MY KIDS were young, we read Dr. Seuss books a lot. We'll know the Seuss books are in the children's section at National Book Store but I love Dr. Seuss so, yes, we

DR. SEUSS' best seller as a movie (above) and as a book (right)



One of our favorites was "The Lorax," a story quite absurd (I'd rather be talking about the ill effects of indiscriminate and consumerism on the planet and its inhabitants.

All right, I'm sorry, so much big words appeared in the story. Here, better here is straight from the title character:

"I am the Lorax, I speak for the trees, which you seem to be chopping so fast you please. But I also speak for the Humming-Fish, who frolicked and played in their Bar-ba-loot water, happily eating the fruits I trees. Now, thanks to your hacking are reduced to the ground, there's not enough of them left to go 'round!"

"And for making such unscrupulous smoke—my poor nostrils sweat, why they can't sing a note! No one can sing who has smog in his throat!"

"Your machinery chugs on, day and night without stop, making gloppity-glopp, and also oldsploppity-schlopp! And what do you do with this left-over goo? ... It ain't glumping the pond where the humming fish hummed! No more can they hum, for their gills are all gummed."

"I speak for the trees! Let them grow! Let them grow! But nobody listens one much, don't you know? They say I'm old-fashioned, and live in the past, but sometimes I think progress progresses too fast!"

So, there, those are the problems in "The Lorax," the environmentalist which can be summed up in the five letters you can stitch on the tree-hoods of loggers and the government officials who abet them: G-R-E-E-D.

Bestselling book

"The Lorax" is a skinny book (72 pages) that flew out-of-the-box (1971). Whimsically written and illustrated by Ted Geisel—a.k.a. Dr. Seuss—the book has sold more than 1.6 million copies so far, with sales doubling every ten years (2003, according to the latest figures).

Seuss pages are beautifully illustrated, shocking-multicolored that are swirls of orange, yellow, pink and blue—delicious in cotton candy.

Just like Dr. Seuss' "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!" and "Horton Hears a Who," there is a corny, oh message in "The Lorax" that must be taken to heart.

Reading these books is like eating good soup. You think you want something light and easy, but you end up getting something wonderful. Silly words and filling.

Given the tragic flooding and landslides that have been happening in our country, "The Lorax" will make for a relevant class lesson for Filipino students from pre-K to high school. Oh heck, throw in college.

The story can be used to teach about the importance of trees, about the threats to their existence and to God's other creatures, and about the hope for a better tomorrow contained in one little seed.

Throughout the story, the Lorax, a spot-mustached, orange-furred creature with a blond mustache, keeps pleading with the lines for us to end the pollution—to no avail.

Seuss keeps the plausibility of the Once-ler a cut-up, shouting only his pants down and legs in the book. Last picture: This is the character he whose madness can substitute the face of anyone who is responsible for environmental abuse—the tycoon-type, the shifter eaters, the factory owner who spills gunk into the river, absolutely anyone they deem as over-villain.

"The Lorax" is such a wonderful tool for teaching about the environment even in 3-D CG animated movie version that spun off activities designed for students of all ages. (See sidebar story.)

Kids speak for trees via art

UNITED International Pictures and Solar Entertainment Corp., together with Greenpeace, is inviting all schools in Metro Manila to participate in Dr. Seuss' the Lorax Tree-School Environment Contest following the theme "Every Day is Earth Day."

This will be held on March 13 at SM Mall of Asia, Shaw Mall, Pasay City.

Contests in several art categories may be participated in by students from preschool up to college. Prizes include: trophies, cash, Lorax gift packs and many awesome tokens.

- Kids may describing in a

source for guidance to Grade 3 students. (maximum of 15 per group)

- Interpretative Dance is for grade school students (maximum of 10 per group)

- Singing Competition with Original Song Composition is for high school and college students (maximum of five per group)

- Audio-Visual Presentation is also for high school and college students (maximum of three per group)

The Intra-School Winners in the competitions, open to all public and private schools, include Juan and Carla the penultimates, 2-D Art (poster, painting, collage or

SEE H2

Respectful racists

I usually have reservations about the cinematic productions of well-loved children's books. "Grandpa within Cleaner of Bluebells," for instance, was such an amazing classic that the owners of left nothing for the imagination and was so unsophisticated from the book. The movie version of "Cat in the Hat" (with Mike Myers) and "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" (with Jim Carrey) were equally disappointing.

But so far the "The Lorax" trailers I have seen seem to be respectful of the Seuss spirit. Produced by the same company that gave us "Despicable Me"—which my family loved—the movie has Danny DeVito voicing the iconic Lorax and Zac Efron as the boy Ted who goes out looking for a real tree for the girl of his dreams, voiced by popstar Taylor Swift.

Closest to Solar Entertainment Corp., the film's Philippine distributor, for taking extra effort reasonably scrutinizing the students to advocate for Mother Nature through contests, campus visits and other activities.

Because when the Lorax says so true, "Unless someone like each of us cut our kids cares a whole unfulfilled, nothing's going to get better. It's not."

"Dr. Seuss' The Lorax" is found is available at all National Book Stores, Powerbooks and Bestsellers. Its movie opens March 14 at digital 3-D and selected 2-D theaters nationwide and at IMAX 3-D.

Congratulations to all the winners!

We salute the winners and the participants of PhilWindow and Edward Tumbali national creative writing competitions in English and Filipino for grade school and high school students. PhilWindow and Edward Tumbali showcase the students' creativity, unfolding a world on them to explore, new vistas on innocent issues.

30 DIWA

NATIONAL CREATIVE WRITING COMPETITION 2011

Theme: "Our Teachers, Our Heroes"

PAMBANSANG PATIMPALAK NA MALIKHAING PAGSULAT 2011

Tema: "Among Guro, Among Bayani"

SPANISH SCHOOL DIVISION | HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION | SPANISH SCHOOL DIVISION | HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION

DIWA

Working mom and tutor, too

PARENTING has its ups and downs.

These days, many parents, especially in the middle and upper classes, want parenting to go smoothly at all costs. They want their children to use them as "cool" rather than "uncool." They worry when their kids yell, "I hate you!" (which the kids do not really mean, unless they are abusive or abusive parents).

Parenting is difficult. Life is difficult. If your relationship with your kids rests only on the good times (meals, parties, trips), then it is shallow.

When kids grow up, they may take things from you (sleepovers, late grades, worst relationships) because they think you don't want to deal with difficult stuff.

It is natural to get irritated when dealing kids. But parenting is a test of patience. Calm down, take a deep breath, and tell your children that, because you love them, you will sometimes teaching them.

Professional nurses lose their patience, too. Would you rather have a stranger nursing her sister to, or worse, hurting your kids?

Several of my students say that when they were in grade school, their tutors in Chinese pinched them when they got low marks but they never told their parents.

Make time

Many parents say they don't have time to teach their kids. Well, make time.

Dodel Bojos Hazabi, editor in chief of "Working Mom" magazine, walks the talk. With grace and style, she manages to balance the demands of work and home, teaching son Zach and daughter Alex.

Dodel's response to tutor Zach, and later reading and arts and crafts time with Alex," Hazabi says. "I consciously join my day to 'turn' go home for a few hours, even if this means staying up 'til three in the morning to finish the work I'm behind on."

While other parents talk about making sacrifices, Hazabi does not seem to feel that way. "I don't call teaching my kids a sacrifice, because it's my job. I am a parent. I wouldn't call meeting a big client a sacrifice. In the greater scheme of things, my kids are more important than any client."

Working parents don't have to be perfect.

"I try to review (with) Zach (his lessons) every day but I'm a working mom. Sometimes, there are just too many things at work. But I don't disappear. I have notes in Zach's lunchbox. I call home. I always ask about school, not just 'How was your test?' but 'What's the most interesting thing you learned today?' and 'What did you do with your classmates during recess?'"

Why husband Ellis's chat was too. He brings Zach to school and picks him up. That's their bonding time ... (Zach) knows his dad's busy, but school's important enough for Dad to make up extra early and move his appointments," Lim quotes Ellis. After school, Zach first relaxes on PS3 game turbo until he perfected the area. Kids will only value learning if we parents do, too."

Dodel thinks in terms of sacrifices, but investments.

"If we teachers the basics now, we will not have to play catch-up later on ... Zach is in the primary grades. His homework is not hard and, since he understands the subject, we just review, focus on a harder topic, or study (lessons in advance)."

Instead of relying on outside tutors or specialists, Hazabi decided to help Zach develop the reading habit. "Right now I am already reaping the benefits of my earlier investment, which was to teach Zach to love reading," she says. "Now we dig through textbooks and (other) resource materials."

Study habits

Effective study habits begin early. "Since I am teaching Zach study skills," Hazabi says, "More than concepts like 'problem' or 'part of a plant,' I want him to learn how to study on his own. So I say, 'Look up the word in the dictionary' or 'check the index of your book or Space' or 'research on the web.'

"I set still there, explaining things, supporting him but, little by little, he is outgrowing the need to study on his own. I will do things right, my kids will have learned to study on their own by Fifth or sixth grade.

"That's why I absolutely refuse to get a tutor," Hazabi says. "If Zach becomes dependent on someone to explain things to him ... or, worse, depended on me to do his homework—there I am digging my own grave. He won't (learn) to do things on his own. I'm not paying for tutors 'til college!

"Busy moms can't say, 'I'll stay busy so surely my child' (I am not afford not to teach him, being too busy) ... We need to train our kids the way we train our staff: or our self just make our jobs harder."

Unlike many parents who say they cannot force to be with their kids while doing homework, Hazabi thinks otherwise. "I love tutoring time. It is a privilege to be part of the kids' learning, especially since I learn so much, too! Zach asks such interesting questions, and now he is asking things I don't even know!

"Once he asked, 'What's gravity made of?' and I was stumped. We checked books and found those exciting theories on gravitons that led to links to the string theory. (I was asked Monday! We loved it. Zach and I spent a good hour reading at those sites. I said, 'I don't completely get it yet, but my hope is to figure it out together.' We still don't get it, but it was fun sharing the questions and bonding over it.

"The most fulfilling part of tutoring is that it deepens my relationship with my son," Hazabi says. "School is a big part of his life now. I love knowing what he's doing, hearing about his friends, watching his experiments, answering his questions. Good grades are a wonderful goal, and Zach is well aware that I will not accept a bad grade. But, more than anything, I treasure these everyday tutoring sessions because they are quality and quantity time with my boy."

Read Pandora's blog at http://workingmother-diary.com/2011/02/8-ways-working-moms-can-stay-involved-in-homework/.

E-mail the author at lissa-hunt@yahoo.com.

THE FAMILY that studies together: Zach, Mel, Dodel, and Alex

Caring for textbooks

By Tara Quimundo

VOWING to address the problem of textbook shortages, the Department of Education (DepEd) has directed schools to take better care of learning materials to preserve their inventories.

Secretary Armin Luistro, in Department of Education Order No. 14 issued this month, directed school heads, principals and teachers to orderly observe distribution and safekeeping procedures for textbooks, teacher's manuals and other learning materials.

In his directive, Luistro said schools should keep supply losses at no more than 1 percent through regular inventory, random checks with students and early retrieval of learning materials before a school year ends.

Books unaccounted for should be immediately reported and located, the order said.

The directive said, "Principals/school heads shall ensure that [learning materials], which are government property, are properly used, saved, be safeguarded from natural and human elements, and recorded."

Inventorying that losses did not exceed 1 percent, DepEd said the whole school and community should be involved in reminding students to return textbooks before the end of a school year.

Luistro said the order aimed to improve access to learning materials, maximize their use, and minimize or eliminate damage and/or losses.

He noted that textbooks, teacher's manuals and other instructional materials, provided free to students and teachers, were intended to be used for at least five years.

Every learner, teacher and school head should exert all efforts to preserve the learning materials in getting their life span, the secretary added.

DepEd needs up to 148 million books for a one-to-one ratio of textbook units in every core subject.

Luistro had said DepEd hoped to fully address the textbook backlog by 2012.

Gearing up for tough college entrance tests

THE COLLEGE entrance examination evokes feelings of excitement and dread.

But not for those who were "Blessed." The review and tutorial centers has produced thousands of successful examinees since 1995.

As dictated, a diagnostic test lets a reviewee know which areas he/she needs to improve on by taking an exam, much like the real thing. The simulation test determines whether the diagnostics worked or not.

Ahead uses test-based review programs powered by an extensive exams bank of the University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University and other top schools in the country.

The topics, degrees of difficulty, types of questions, and time limit in actual exams are used in the diagnostics and simulation tests.

Ahead teachers spend reading to help students finish on time. The mind-mapping exercise helps students sharpen memory, creativity and analytical thinking.

A few weeks before the actual exam, reviewees get a refresher course.

Enrollees for Ahead review programs recently enjoyed summer promos. Classes begin in March.

Call Ahead at 4200004 to 26, 09175998/BLAU/2432233 or e-mail review@ahead.edu.ph.

Australians to get a taste of Filipino barbecue

THE CENTER for Culinary Arts (CCA) will bring the best of Filipino cuisine to Australia.

The CCA team is participating in Melbourne's Food and Wine Festival to be held along the Yarra River March 2-12.

Together with the Southbank Social Club Restaurant in Melbourne, CCA chefs and students will prepare a traditional Filipino lunch buffet, "Filipino Rustic" (barbecue) that will include lechon and okoy, among other things.

The CCA team aims to elevate Filipino cuisine to a higher level and give Australians a different culinary experience. Along this line, CCA, Manila, forged a partnership with the William Angliss Institute, with the CCA chefs doing a cooking demonstration of Filipino dishes.

In return, instructors from William Angliss will teach the CCA students during Coffee Class how to brew delightful coffee concoctions and show their innovative techniques.

Chef-instructors of CCA, Manila, the recipient of many recognitions and awards, are now officially certified culinary professionals by the prestigious American Culinary Federation (ACF), the first among Filipino chefs to receive the distinction.

ACF the largest professional chefs organization in North America and sanctioned by the Council on Higher Education for Accreditation, is the only organization to accredit culinary arts, baking and pastry programs in the United States.

Its accreditation of CCA, Manila's chef instructors make the Philippines the only country outside the United States (apart from Switzerland) to have American-certified chefs. It also made CCA, Manila, the first in the country to have ACF certified chefs.

Call 4206895 (to 97) or 8942500 (and 401 or 402) or www.cca.manila.com.

THE CCA, MANILA team composed of chefs Melissa Sison Dichiara (left) and Jonathan Bautista (2nd from right), public relations manager Anne Corrinne Palmares (center) and students RJ Bernardo, Myrabrell Ignacio, Josarine Arriaga and Randy Pacolda

PUP alumni homecoming

THE ECONOMICS Alumni Association Inc. Polytechnic University of the Philippines (EAAI-PUP) will have a grand alumni homecoming on March 17 at the Subsuganong Bonifacio, PUP Main Library Makati Campus, Metro Manila.

Registration starts at 2 p.m. The event begins at 3 p.m.

The theme of the event is "It's more fun to be back!"

Rhonnie Fernando L. Martinez, chair of the Association of Independent Philippine Petroleum Companies and chief executive officer of Eastern Petroleum Corporation, is guest speaker.

The organization that is PSBA-Research from the event will support the Computer Center and Library, as well as scholarships.

Visit www.facebook.com/groups/PUPEAAI. Contact the following EAAI-PUP officers: Dani Bolo at 0917.5770598/9326.9482509, Aida Luzon-Zipagan at 0949.7932278, professor Nora Lolong at 0933.8861486, Maribel Reyes-Brozo at 0917.8552107 and professor Nancy Salud-Hayomo at 7757968.

Student teachers hold first national convention

STUDENT teachers from all over the Philippines will converge for the first World Council for Curriculum and Instruction (WCCI) Pilot National Student Chapter Convention on Mar. 3, 8 a.m.–5 p.m., at the Morales Multipurpose Hall, Iloilo City.

The main speaker, Ambeth Ocampo, professor, historian and business columnist, will discuss the ideals and heroism of Dr. Jose P. Rizal.

The WCCI is a transnational organization of educators that aims to establish person-to-person contact in building a peaceful and humane global community. It is registered under the charter II Recognized of the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

It has celebrated its 40th anniversary as an international organization and its 25th anniversary in the Philippines.

Student teachers will be exposed to various WCCI interest groups: global education, gender sensitivity, media technology, environmental sustainability, human rights education, ethics, early childhood education, special education, community development, cultural arts education and peace education.

They can choose the focus of their personal and professional development growth in networking with fellow members in and outside the Philippines.

Former WCCI convener presidents, who will address the conference, are Drs. Fe Hidalgo, Wim Lim-Paseo, Delizar Bramson, Carmen Calonge, Carolina Dumas, Adel Sevilla and Lala Castella. Dr. Teodora Pedrajas and Jayson Bergania are moderators.

WCCI will elect its officers during the conference. Chair Dr. Patricia B. Licuanan of the Commission on Higher Education will induct the officers and deliver an inspirational message.

Organizing the convention is the School of Education of the Central City Iloilo Colleges of Taguig City, with the Governor WCCI national executive board headed by Fr. Orlando Acosta, OIC of the Colegio de San Juan de Letran. Cooperators are Om Shradan Foundation, Phoenix Publishing House, Inlandt Ltd., Edu-Drawer, Rex Publishing House, Bench Printing Services and La Concordia International College, among others.

Presidents and deans of colleges of education are encouraged to send their students.

Kids speak...

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drawing) For grades/sections: 3-D Art (sculpture or art installation) for high school students, and Functional Art (furniture, craftwork or wearable items) for college students.

Any school that wishes to participate must submit the accomplished registration form via e-mail to nbabpcom@gmail.com.

Each school can submit a maximum of two entries per category.

All participants should be at the SM Mall of Asia on March 10, when judging and awarding are also scheduled to be held.

Deadline for submission of entries is March 2, 5 p.m. Bring posters for exterior mechanics.

For more info, e-mail shalyn.rondain@gmail.com or sandy.tevy@solas-mip.com.ph or visit www.facebook.com/ThyLoveMovie.ph for more details.

20 public schools to receive grants

THE BASIS Salazar Foundation (BSF) has launched the search for 20 selected public schools in Barangay that will receive grants.

The project is in celebration of its 20th anniversary.

Project 20/20 is open to all Barangay public elementary and high schools.

Proposals implementing partner First Asia Institute of Technology and Humanities (FAITH) in Tanauan City will assist in implementing and monitoring the project.

The grant is available to projects to all areas of school operations, as long as the projects benefit the school and its community.

Doing things, BSF executive director, said Project 20/20 was part of their commitment to uplift the quality of education in the country and complemented similar projects in the past.

BSF is the social development arm of Affiliate Asia Pacific Ltd., Diana Learning Systems Inc., Biotech Magazine Inc., Biotech Holdings.

E-mail Venus Sayo at bfi@basisworld.com. Accomplished forms should be submitted by March 9. Grants will be awarded in June.

Venus Sayo

Playgrounds for the MIND

E-mail: [illegible]@inquirer.com.ph
Copy Editor Chapie Medina

Member Schools

TELUS partners with APC to teach business and IT programs

Top call center and outsourcing services provider TELUS International Philippines (TIP) has signed a new partnership with Asia Pacific College (APC) for TELUS International University (TIU).

TIP and APC formalized their partnership with a commercial memorandum of agreement signing at TELUS Market! Market!, Taguig City. The event was attended by TIP president Jeff Ubsdell, APC president Dr. Paulino Tan, top APC officials, and the TIU heads.

"This is another exciting partnership for TIP and Ubsdell. "TIU is a revolutionary approach to learning and course development that is influenced by our culture here at TELUS. Our partnership with APC helps to ensure greater success for the future of our company, as well as our team members. We are very grateful to APC for helping us to widen the reach of that program recently."

According to Dr. Tan, to stay one skillfinds to do edits on the partnership. "As an educational institution, one of our goals is to look out for partnerships that can help us ensure our curriculum is innovative for our students. When TELUS came to us with the proposal, we were interested right away," he said.

APC will carefully selected faculty members who will conduct classes in TELUS Home Antenna and Market! Market!. APC will offer TIU students courses on business management and information technology, two of APC's best run programs.

TIU is an innovative program that provides an opportunity for team members to earn college degrees in various fields while concurrently working full-time. TIP offers classes at reduced costs and provides classrooms, library books, computers and other educational equipment on the company premises for the students to use, making college education more affordable and accessible for its team members.

ABA Pacific College president Dr. Paulino Tan and TELUS International Philippines president Jeff Ubsdell shake hands during the ceremonial contract signing held at TELUS Market! Market!

CEU holds 22nd jobs and careers fair

CENTRO Escolar University-University Student Council (CEU-USC) in partnership with the Centro Escolar University-Marketing Communication Department (CEU-DECS) held the 22nd Jobs and Careers Fair with the theme "Self-Empowerment for Success in Chosen Career" recently at the CEU Student Activity Center.

The one-day activity aimed to help the participants sustain contact with the different participating business companies and government institutions, demonstrate enhanced skills for on-line job application, enhance professional image, and source information on other suitable career options.

"There is no more powerful tool than those two words: Science and Virtue, knowledge and values. These two words helped me be empowered. Self-empowerment is indeed important, because after graduation, you have to face the world on your own, interviews, future clients, etc.," remarked the speaker, Dr. Marie Elaine Centino Blumlein, CEU alumna batch 2000 and 2005 Optometry licensure examination topnotcher.

"In everything I do, I always put passion into it. Let me share with you what passion means for me: P- proficient, A-assessment, I-self-confidence, S-service, I-integrity, O-organized, and N-team. We should be proficient in the assessment of ourselves, we should have self-confidence in everything we do, and we should also be of service of others, just like how we were taught in our university, in everything we do, we should have integrity and be organized, and lastly, we should act now because time is a precious gift," said Dr. Marcelo.

"To be passionate and to have passion in what you do would empower you in the field that you have chosen," Dr. Marcelo concluded.

The features of the event were company booth-hopping and on-line job search. An added feature was a career expo regarding BPO updates on healthcare information management, home-based on-line jobs, and international placement job qualifications and requirements of hospitality management workers.

The event wrapped-up with the announcement of the three most supportive companies, most organized school/college program for the job-hunting seekers, and most participative school/college for job hunting seminars.

DR. LILIA Tolentino with Dr. Rikriz Yahan and Mayor Nena Yahan after the exchange of tokens.

HAIFA MAYOR VISITS SPU MANILA

MAYOR Nena Yahan of Balik, Israel, his First Lady Rivka Yahan, and their entourage visited St. Paul University Manila last Feb. 13. The visit was one of the activities organized by the City of Manila during the mayor's four-day (trip) in the city to renew the 40-year relations between Manila and Haifa as sister cities established in March 1981 during the late Gatpano Antonio J. Villegas' administration. Highlights of Mayor Yahan's visit to SPU Manila were a tour of the university's newly opened Museum and Archives; a program of Filipino songs and dances presented by the students; and a reception in the school's coffee shop. University president Dr. Lilia Therese L. Tolentino, SPC and Mayor Yahan exchanged tokens during the program. Although the visit was a brief one, it generated much goodwill and friendly relations between Mayor Yahan and Dr. Tolentino both have engaging personalities that charmed the Pasaynian community.

Makati government holds dialogue on climate change and geo-hazards

UNIVERSITY of Makati in collaboration with Planned Center for Local Governance recently hosted a dialogue on the environment with specific focus on climate change and geo-hazards.

Speaking before the forum, Secretary Ramon Paje of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources expounded his anti-logging and anti-illegal mining advocacies to moderate climate change typified by Typhoon Sendong that recently devastated Northern Mindanao areas of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan City.

The secretary stressed that the country needs to put highest priority on environment recently. He added that there is a pressing need to answer the present and future generations against the threats of climate change and environmental degradation brought about by man-made and natural calamities.

As a result of the dialogue, the participants agreed to organize a Mindanao summit on climate change and geo-hazards in Cagayan de Oro City. This former is to prepare Mindanao communities in meeting calamities striking their climate change. Participants expressed to participate in Mindanao local government executives including governors, mayors and other local government officials.

PWU JOINS 11TH PHILFOOD EXPO

THE PHILIPPINE Women's University recently organized a series of culinary competitions for students as part of the 11th Philippine Food Expo (PFE) at the World Trade Center. With the theme "From Farm to Fork, the Best Food Products in the World," the Philippine Food Processors and Exporters Organization (Philfoods), PWU and Cut Unlimited signed a partnership agreement to host a series of culinary competitions for students. Cut Unlimited is the event manager. Financials are Prof. Adel Mirabile, PWU dean of Hospitality and Tourism Management; Dr. Milagros Magsanoc, PFE project director Hayme Bautista, PWU president Jose Francisco Benitez, and PWU vice president for External Affairs Alfredo Rojas.

Student congress on teaching held for Davao/Southern Mindanao region

UNIVERSITY of Mindanao College of Teacher Education (UMCTE) hosted the first Student Congress for Region XI with a theme "Providing Competent and Board Teacher Education in the Pre-Service Teachers in the Country"

The whole-day activity was held last Feb. 8 at UM Matina Gymnasium, and participated by 1,200 second year to fourth year Education students coming from Davao Central College, Holy Cross of Davao College, University of Immaculate Conception, and University of Mindanao main and branches (UM Panabo, UM Tagum, UM Digos).

The event was geared by the performance of UM Dronio and UM Makabayan Dancers.

Speakers coming from the Department of Education (DepEd) were invited to discuss and elaborate on the new DepEd program and the essential competencies and skills necessary for effective professional teachers.

Dr. Beatriz E. Tratico, executive director of Teacher Education Council (TEC), discussed the K-to-12 program, while Dr. Ronnie Mahari tackled the topic, 21st Century Competencies and Skills for Effective Professional Teachers.

On the other hand, Dr. Fe L. Lucido, TEC board representative for Luzon, concluded the morning session with her topic "Making the Most of My Pre-Service." The afternoon session focused more on the application of Experiential Learning Courses (ELC) and National Competency-Based Teacher Standards (NCBTS). This was executed through the lecture of Dr. Sharon Miguel Amor on Career Path Table of Specification-Licensure Examination for Teachers (TOS-LET) and the coordinating talk of Dr. Rosario G. Torres on Hiring Guidelines.

All participants were provided with Experiential Learning Course Tools and National Competency-based Teacher Standards (NCBTS) handbook.

Through the student congress, participants had a deeper appreciation of Experiential Learning Courses (ELC) and the objectives of the National Competency-based Teacher Standards (NCBTS) which are central in passing the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET).

In addition, the Student Congress made students appreciate the complex set of behavior, attitude and skills that they have to possess in order to carry out a satisfactory performance of their roles and responsibilities as future educators.

Letran strengthens pact with Intramuros schools

COLLEGE OF San Juan de Letran strengthened its ties with neighboring educational institutions through the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with other members schools of the Intramuros Consortium (IC). The MOA signing was held at the Sr. Thomas Hall on Feb. 14, and was attended by the heads and various administrators of the various IC local schools.

Letran rector and president Rev. Fr. Valentino R. Lazo, OP endorsed the guests to the College in his opening remarks. "I believe the schools under the consortium are seeking areas in order to draw out common projects that would benefit not only our schools, but most especially the place where our schools are situated—that place where our schools have been nurtured for many years, and also the place that has for us, a historical significance. And that place for us is Intramuros," he said.

Along with Fr. Lazo, present in the MOA signing were Colegio de Sta. Rosa principal Sr. Ma. Dolores Dagohoson, A.R.; Lyceum of the Philippines University (LPU) president lawyer Rubrico P. Laurel; Mapua Institute of Technology executive vice president for academic affairs Dr. Bonifacio Dona Jr.; and Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila vice president for academic affairs Dr. Neri Pascadera.

Dr. Alma Rodriguez, Commission on Higher Education-NCR Chief Education Program Specialist, and Jose Capistrano, Jr., head of the Intramuros administration, were also on-hand to witness the MOA signing and to give congratulatory messages.

Dr. Victorina H. Zosa, executive director of LPU's Research and Publications Center, presented a brief background on the details of the IC MOA.

The 2012 version of the IC MOA contains academic cooperation points from the 2001 version namely: cooperative development of instructional and library facilities, research and publications; coordination to encourage involving training committees and workshops, conferences, student development and welfare; possible sharing of materials and textbooks for degree programs; development and evaluation; and cooperation on administrative concerns such as institutional development, procurement, taxes, and subsidies.

New amendments in the IC MOA that will be collaborated on are academics and innovation; research and publications; and community extension services.

HIGH ish. Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila vice president for academic affairs Dr. Neri Pascadera, Letran rector and president Rev. Fr. Valentino R. Lazo, O.P., Colegio de Sta. Rosa principal Sr. Ma. Dolores Dagohoson, A.R., Mapua Institute of Technology executive vice president for academic affairs Dr. Bonifacio Dona Jr., and Lyceum of the Philippines University president lawyer Roberto P. Laurel

BRIEFS

MISSILING DONATION. De La Salle Carmona donated 450 seedlings to the City Government of Bacoor for their tree planting activity as part of the city's week-long celebration of their 2nd Cityhood Anniversary. As a Lasallian school, DLSC is also known for its awareness and continuing efforts in fostering care for and protection of the environment while also complementing the city's campaigns.

Upsilonian lawyers to host testimonial dinner

UPSILONIAN lawyers will host a testimonial dinner at the UP Executive House for dean Danny Concepcion of the UP College of Law at 7 p.m., Feb. 27. Invited to speak at the event are Retired Supreme Court Justices Florentino Feliciano and Jose Bellosillo and former Secretary of Justice and Solicitor General Emilio Mendoza. UP president Emil Pascual will present an award to dean Concepcion. All Upsilonians lawyers are invited to attend. For more details please call lawyer Rico Agcaoili at (0920) 901-1306, or e-mail ricoagcaoili@yahoo.com.

'e-generation' HS student leaders from south Manila hold summit

SOUTH WILLS International School and Colleges (SWSC), in partnership with the Asian Federation of Student Leaders (AFSL) and The Outstanding Students of the Philippines Alumni Community (TOSPHIL), hosted the Southern Leaders Summit 2012 with the theme, "Mission Yet Possible: Leaders of the e-Generation." More than 50 student leaders and mentors from various high schools in Muntinlupa, Las Piñas, and Parañaque attended the said summit held at the Tutored of the Future - SWSC Media Center. Divided into two phases, namely, students' and mentors' tracks, the gathering fostered solidarity and motivated synergy, responsibility, responsiveness and social awareness among various student councils officers and their advisers. Breakout groups and sessions served as a venue for socialization and camaraderie. With a clamor for more innovative leadership trends to inspire youth movement, SSLC is set to launch another leadership summit dubbed the AFSL Summer Camp 2012.

FEATI University concludes Science & Technology Expo 2012

STUDENTS from different Manila high schools came together to test their mettle and abilities on "Tech Minds Outstanding Challenge," a FEATI-driven intellectual challenge that's become one of the most anticipated events in the science and technology exposition. In this expo, students, faculty members, alumni, and employers head the opportunity to connect and demonstrate tech-minds research projects to the science and technology community. Highlight of the expo was the awarding of the Zero Dap, a prestigious award granted to the best research project in the college category. Six on the spot art competition was also held, while general information and skill quizzes pitted their skills against each other in a Quiz Bee competition. Teams from Don M. Pedro High School, Capitolyo Arellano High School, and E. Rilloza High School participated. Guest luminaries from the R&D industry supported the two-day expo. Keynote speaker during the opening day was Hon. Angelo E. Palmones, ACAP Party List Representative. The opening PEATI DAT Expo is organized by the Office of Research, Development, Extension and Technical Services (OREDES) chaired by Dr. Rogelio A. Panlasigui, dean of the College of Engineering (COE) and director of OREDES.

GC21 e-Academy and UPOU conduct eLearning workshop

LITERATI of the Philippines University-Batangas' College of Computer Studies (CCS) faculty members Ma. Angelica P. Sinelle & Abby Isaacs) the Second Train-to-Train eLearning Development and Implementation Asia 2011 Workshop conducted by GC21 through its GC21 E-Academy and the University of the Philippines Open University.

Training participants processed the developed eLearning course, the final requirement for certification as a Trainer.

The GC21 E-Academy belongs to the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), which supports the German government in achieving its goals in international cooperation for sustainable development. It offers around 60 online courses following international quality norms. The objective is to promote further development and utilization of eLearning expertise and technologies that meet the demand in developing countries.

Course were made available for participants from developing and emerging markets who grabbed this opportunity to apply for eLearning skills training. Host participants from Sri Lanka, four from Mongolia, one from India, one from Jordan and four from the Philippines, which included Evelyn Bell from UPLB Batangas, were selected and qualified for eight months of online training.

The content of the blended learning and tutor-guided online courses covered relevant topics such as International Design, Course Development, Interactivity, eLearning Technologies, eLearning Management, and Tutoring for eLearning Communities.

During the training, the participants were able to develop new online and blended learning modules on professional topics, and debrief in detail on project management, course development and implementation as well as the use of Web 2.0 technologies.

The training also included two face-to-face workshops. The first week-long workshop was held at the GIZ Service Center in Bonn, Germany in October to last December.

This was followed by online learning from April to October where the participants browsed the modular course materials, took tests, communicated and collaborated with co-participants and Tutors through e-mails, scheduled chats, online debates, role plays and discussion forums, submitted documents, links and projects using application software such as Adobe Connect, Wiki, Moodle (Learning Management System) and elluminate Live (Learning Content Management System).

HONOR ROLL

UE Library receives PAARL recognition as outstanding academic and research library

UNIVERSITY of the East Library was recognized as the 2011 Outstanding Academic and Research Library by the Philippine Association of Academic and Research Libraries (PAARL) for its exemplary contributions to academic and research librarianship, outstanding leadership at national and regional library development in the areas of management, education, training, information and documentation services, automated bibliometrics networking and linkages, and the PAARL's objectives as demonstrated by its continued support and cooperation with PAARL's activities and accomplishments. The UE delegation headed by the director for Department of Libraries, Loreto Sarsia, received the plaque of recognition and each pro-during PAARL's general assembly held on Jan. 27 at the De La Salle University, Dasmariñas, Cavite. The other 9 libraries nominated for the 2011 PAARL award were FEU Library, ISU-Ilaro Library, and University of Batangas Library. The PAARL Committee on Awards included by retired San Beda College librarian Minda Chavez, with PLM chief librarian Rebecca Lorenzo, retired CSU librarian Marietta Molina, PUP-chief librarian Marcelina Logarta, and AdMU librarian Irene Fabia as members. PAARL is an association of librarians in academic and research libraries that support scholarly research and formal education to the tertiary level and upheld the profession of librarianship in the country. It grants annual awards to promote academic and research librarianship. UE Library is a system of 16 libraries spread out in the different colleges of both the UE Manila and UE Caloocan campuses, equipped with more than 200 computers stations, three computer rooms, numerous printers, scanners, Xerox machines, and recondition and refurbishes reader with 24 hours access. It has various types of materials like CDs, VCDs and DVD to inside the library. Its collections include 349,868 book volumes (as of January 2012), subscriptions to 180 CD Publishing journals and 18 Logic ebooks, and thousands of printed journals. Its security controls include CCTVs, security guards and bar protection equipment. 36 Mandriles 11 librarians with a total of 2,120 reading capacity with the UE Main Library occupying the second to fifth floor of the P.S. Domingo Center for Information Technology. For more information on the UE Library, contact tel. nos. 735-5471 to 85 local 402, or log on to www.ue.edu.ph.

SBC nursing students wins 13th inter-school pre-medicine quiz show

SAN BEDA College-College of Nursing delegation (SBC-CON) emerged as champions in the recently concluded 13th Inter-School Pre-Medicine quiz show sponsored by the Brotherhood of Medical Scholars held at Jacob Ateneo auditorium. Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila last Feb. 11. The event is in line with the celebrations of the 26th founding anniversary of the Brotherhood of Medical Scholars, the oldest and the only male organization of PLM - College of Medicine, with the theme "BMS: 26 Years of a United Brotherhood." The organization aims to extensively their projects on maintaining excellence in academics, community service and leadership. The winners, composed of senior nursing students Joseph Angelo Reyes, Dhanelle Ramos Pascual and Marielle Grace Sangalang, together with their coach Dr. James Ace Lopilar Pierre, and SBC-CON faculty Pedro P. Aguilar III and Rachelle R. Rafanolis PTRP MMA, RN, landed 1st after competing teams from different colleges and universities. During the contest proper, Dr. Ferrante L. Labao Jr., DPPS served as the quiz master together with the set of judges in their subjects of expertise. The competition was divided into two rounds: elimination and final. The top four teams who accumulated points in the final round were from UST-CON, DLSU-CD, PWU-CS, SBC-CON and PLM-CON. San Beda College College of Nursing was in the lead in the middle of the final round. However, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila and De La Salle University-Dasmariñas managed to score five points after a series of questions, resulting in a triple tie in the final round. A three more clincher round followed, and SBC-CON got two questions correctly and emerged as the winner, while PLM and DLSU-Dasmariñas garnered 4th place and 5th place, respectively. The champions were awarded cash prizes, medals, certificates and the much-coveted perpetual trophy.

AFP confers ROTC cadet award on UPHSD student

CADET Colonel Charles Anthony Catarbas was awarded by President Aquino as the Armed Forces of the Philippines ROTC Cadet of the Year 2011. He made was bestowed during the Armed Forces of the Philippines 100th Anniversary held last Dec. 21 at General Headquarters of AFP in Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo in Quezon City. Catarbas was also awarded as the Philippine Air Force ROTC Cadet of the Year 2011 during the Philippine Air Force 64th Anniversary held last July 1, 2011 in Villamor Airbase Pasay/Land in Pasay City. Prior to these, he was conferred the Outstanding Graduate Award on May 28, 2011 during the Task Force Summer Cadet Training Class in Air Force City, Clark Air Base, Pampanga. He graduated Top 8 in the graduating class of 2011 with grade both in academic and military phases of education. Catarbas is currently the University of Perpetual Help System DALTA Las Piñas Corps Commander of the 130th Department of Air Science and Tactics. He is also enrolled as a third year student pursuing a degree in Mechanical Engineering.

Claretian earns Eagle Scout award

CADET Hans Ernesto A. delos Santos successfully passed the Board of Review for Eagle Scouts held on Feb. 16 during the conduct of the Golden Powell Camp 2012 at the BPI Compound, La Mesa Dam, Quezon City. He will be receiving the Eagle Scout Award of the Republic of the Philippines (BSP). To be awarded an Eagle Scout rank, a scout must lead in planning and doing two community service projects, and earn a total of 21 merit badges consisting of 11 required merit badges and 2 special rel ratings (a specialized rating involves 3 related merit badges and a community service project). By earning the rank, this Grade 8 Claretian student may now be called Eagle Scout, Eagle, or Agila.

UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas Association Of Thomasian Psychology Alumni (UST ATPA Inc) is calling all Psychology Graduates for a Grand Alumni Homecoming, "I Psychout: The Beginning," Mar. 3, 4 p.m., at Metro Concert Bar, West Avenue, Quezon City. This event will also celebrate the birthday of Fr. Angel Orillas, the founder of Psychology in 1911, and will launch the 2012 ATPA Scholarship and Financial Assistance Program. For tickets and details, you may call 0906-1167/ 0915-8233/ or 0922-849-8215. You may also check the Facebook Fan Page IPSYCHEDTHEBEGINNING, follow #ipsychout at Twitter, or visit www.volatpa.com.

How to teach English

From page H1

Nicanor Legarte Guinto

From page H5

on language education. We don't even have a clear language policy which research in the local and international setting has proven to be the primal tool in developing functional literacy in the early years of education.

Another overbearing factor is the culture of correction and punishment attached to the English language, which is perhaps the hallmark of elementary education. In the early years, the pupil is punished by regarding him/her to pay a fine if one cries his/her best or translates his/her patriotic thoughts into a language deemed foreign to him/her and commits grammatical mistakes, he/she is instantly become the subject of ridicule and is laughed at.

Nobody wants to be punished. Nobody wants to be laughed at. The result is unhealthy anxiety for a boy in a college classroom attempts to communicate in the language they are supposed to be well-versed in given the level of their education.

The sad part about being a college teacher is that certain personal, social and intellectual factors framed to hinder genuine learning are, more often than not, irreparable since the students are past what neurobiologists call the "critical age period."

No matter how much input you provide to transform behavior into motivation to use the language, it would still be like talking to a rarely empty space.

Gone are the days of Spartan teaching philosophies. You can't expect these mature students to have fear in bending the rules because most of them have the money power and influence to jab you out of your sanity.

Instead, be friendly with them. Confront forgiving the teacher-student bonded because only then could they be open to communication in the English language, devoid of anxiety.

These students are at their most crucial period of growth. They need someone to guide and educ8them as ear to listen and a shoulder to cry on. By instituting this kind of atmosphere in class, they wouldn't mind making mistakes because they wouldn't feel embarrassed. Let them feel that you appreciate their talking or effort in sharing their ideas with you, who is always a stranger to them (or similar words of encouragement).

Scrap the old movie and/or story collection. (If possible) and try to explore the latest things offered by their fellow outstanding youth that could serve as an inspiration.

If you can't get away from the classic, treat them to a puzzle to spur story land. But don't forget to leave them hanging so they wouldn't feel the urge to read the stories themselves, how inside more vivid by your insightful storytelling, so they can find out the ending on their own.

Let them realize the beauty of being proficient in the language without you saying it by letting them feel it through dynamic activities that are less stressful, but enhance their communicative competence in the language.

It is true that changing our teaching philosophies is tough. But, among all the many professions in the world, we are the ones who have to adhere strongly to the code for unquestionable flexibility and perpetual adaptation to changes.

A good teacher therefore, is one who can initiate change overnight. Sometimes it's difficult, but we have to. After all, we teach not for our own advantage, but for the next generation's success.

Maheswary Das

From page H1

get full scores in such grammar tests.

Yet language teachers are baffled when students, who get perfect scores in grammar tests, cannot speak or write correctly.

One reason is that grammar taught and learned in class does not focus on usage.

A meaningful way to teach and learn grammar would be to use the grammatical unit in a meaningful context. After all, we use language in various social contexts—at home, school, supermarket, office, airport, sickbed movie, etc.

Sandra McLaren-Tolentino found her students clueless about the phrase "to the family way," meaning being pregnant. Instead of presenting games and rewards, students can be asked to role play a situation where this phrase is used.

Initially the script can be supplied by the teacher, with students either memorizing or reading as they act out the scene. Then students can be made to deduce the meaning by themselves. An example of a role play to learn about "to the family way" is as follows:

Lark M. Jones. I have not seen you in ages. How are you? Where are?

Answer: Good. By the way, meet my wife, Josie. We are on the way to the Medical Center.

Lark: Visiting a patient?

Answer: My wife is in the family way. It is our first child.

Lark: Congrats on both of you.

Answer and Josie: Thanks.

Apart from meaningful learning within a context, the short role play provides many hints. Students also get to deduce the meaning of the grammatical unit by themselves, which helps in better retention. The teacher can also take the opportunity to introduce another phrase, on the way, to the wise.

Grammar is best learned when incorporated into the four macro skills—listening, speaking, reading and writing.

For example, the phrase "to the family way" can be introduced in a listening activity. The teacher can find opportunities to insert the phrase into speaking, reading and writing activities. Constant reinforcements will eventually lead to proper usage.

The "only speak English in my class" rule will only create a very quiet and disciplined classroom.

A student's first language, for example Tagalog, can be used in the classroom to help the student develop awareness that one rule in which from English to Tagalog if he or she cannot find the right word to express a certain meaning. The teacher or a more proficient student can supply the right word or sentence and this will eventually motivate the student to use the language that is being learned in the classroom.

Rich code switching techniques can also foster a better teacher-student relationship, which is so important when learning is concerned. It is better to speak in some English than not to speak at all.

Many teachers are not motivated to mark essays when they see every single line in a student's essay needs to be corrected. A better way is to mark selected errors. Tell the students that only two or three grammatical items will be monitored.

For example, the teacher can look out for the correct usage of conjunctions and subject-verb agreements for the first three essays. Once the students are aware of their mistakes the teacher can go on to tackle other areas of grammar.

When students see small improvements they will be inspired to learn further.

A good book to refer to on classroom techniques and teaching is "Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice" by Jack C. Richards and Willy A. Renandya. (editors). 2010 Cambridge University Press.

Johanna Rose D. Brikas

From page H1

It is true that public high schools are at a bit of a disadvantage compared to private schools. One big reason for this is they lack books and other reference materials to help students and enrich the learning experience. However, there are many public schools with excellent teachers who more than make up for the shortage in books and materials.

I became because I am a "product of the public educational system in the province."

You can't put all the blame on your students' leaner schools. Perhaps the quality of their education was poor, but learning language and grammar isn't done only within the four walls of a classroom.

But everyone is privileged to be surrounded by English-speaking people every moment of every day or to have plenty of reading materials on hand. So grammar principles are absorbed to conversation and in reading, perhaps that is the main reason for their poor English.

This is why your strategy of requiring your students to speak in English at all times during your class can be an effective technique. On the other hand, I think "penalizing" them for breaking your rule would make it worse like talking in English is an unpleasant chore they have to endure. Try to make it sweet as casual and enjoyable as possible. For example, instead of penalizing them, why not give rewards to those who don't break the rule?

Don't be too hard on them if they let slip in a Tagalog word or two. In my opinion, there's nothing wrong if you interspersr your sentences with some Filipino during class. If it will make your students less intimidated, it will help them in understanding the lesson better; then why not?

The same goes for when you talk to them outside the classroom. No wonder they avoid you: you make it seem like talking to you is a "practice session" and your performance will be judged and graded. Try talking to them in Tagalog first before gradually switching to English.

Then there's your movie recommendations. I am one who enjoys movies, I think watching movies is another way to get their ears more used to hearing spoken English. Only perhaps your movie choices were a bit too much of the same old thing, "My Fair Lady" and "Schindler's List" aren't new films.

Perhaps you could choose movies that are a bit more contemporary and a little less complicated—something they can relate to and enjoy. You need to catch their attention first, otherwise how can you effectively teach them is like the language?

With regard to your students who "copy-paste" their book report, my brilliant (sheer sarcasm) teacher had this answer: At the start of the semester, she would give us a list of more than 200 recommended novels and their respective authors, ranging from George Orwell to Nick Joaquin. She told us that we had to choose the book which we had to have read by the end of the semester. In our final exam, we had to answer questions about the books we chose. The questions were tricky ones. Not only (were the answers) completely "copy-paste" proof, they also required a thorough understanding of the book chosen.

For example: We were asked to write a journal entry from the point of view of any of the characters at any point during the story. We also had to write a letter to the author, plot an alternate ending. If chose to read "The French Lieutenant's Woman," so imagine my horror when I found out we had to make an alternate ending! I didn't even bother to read the book. I just read some reviews.

Perhaps if you decide to revive your book club, you can make your students participate more by first recommending books that are easy to read or something they can relate to and would pique their interest.

There are plenty of Young Adult (YA) books out in the market, which are all the rage with teenage and young adult readers nowadays. I know they're not exactly the ideal books to help you improve your more "literary" read, but if it would get them to read then it will be worth it.

One other thing, if you think the students are not able to appreciate the author's words, then let them appreciate the story as it is. Try to make them understand the story even if you have to translate some of the words into Filipino.

Not everyone has the ability to recognize and grasp the literary of an author's prose but everyone can appreciate a good story and, ultimately, the purpose of books is to tell a story.

Joan Valenzuela

From page H1

You wrote you gave [your students] small creatures like DVDs, that are online-bound, and I assume you did pick them yourself. You confessed this approach didn't work. Who are these students? What are their backgrounds (socially, culturally, attitudinally, otherwise)? Why?

I say what you're doing is middle-class offending. You come from this orientation and that's what you're doing. You certainly don't know how to "teach" even if you think you do.

This is patronizing and quite hilariously violent. Reading Mbowenzi (Ferdi) McCourt did away with this practice. He used recipes for writing class.

Oh, forget about flattening me reading supervised Lesser Heroes), Hemingway, Dave Tabang (Virginia), Woolf, (William) Shakespeare, etc., birdbrd for now.

The two books penalty and 3000 and 1,000 pesos rewards are funny. No amount of external motivation can result in meaningful learning. That's very basic and can be degrading. Classrooms are not kids' party houses.

Also, forcing students to speak in English outside the classroom is a violation of their right to their native and indigenous language. The English can be perfect, it should. It's uncontaminated and traveling.

You need to deconfront yourself, purge yourself of your former mis-ess-ion way of schooling, of the elitist view of what it means to be literate.

Hard to accept, but it's a discussion when we force students to swallow a bitter pill and would throw when they puke.

Mainstream schooling values standards, propriety values of a small fraction of our society...the elite.

Ask them what they want to read, or what they don't want to read. Perhaps they don't want to read. Perhaps they don't want to read anything—reading, nature, grammar, manners, hours, stores, rote fields, etc.

Most of us still look at literacy from "white studies" perspectives. It's time we quit and go back to our roots.

Tips for teachers, in case you haven't: McCourt, Paulo Freire, Ivan Illich, Edward Said, Michel Foucault, Claude Alvares.

You may also want to check out the Multiversity in India. Google it, please!

Anne H. (aka Mrs. English)

From page H1

wonderful English literatures (and other subjects), but (dictated) by their lack of basic knowledge and correct use.

Having taught HS. (English as a Foreign Language) for many years now, I created recently a free social network website to encourage students to:

- Watch videos that explain important grammar points.
- Encourage students to ask questions to reinforce understanding of points explained, and

- Participate in a forum where questions are answered by peers and fully qualified teachers (including myself).

While still in its very early stages (second week since launch), I have members from Asia and Europe, some of whom are my former students' former Business School students. In fact, the website aims to provide them with a platform to continue to practice their skills.

If you think your students might enjoy the "fun" aspect of improving their language skills via social networking sites to be a major part of student life (those days), then please feel free to share this website link (http://www.mes-english.com) with them and your colleagues.

My aim is to increase teacher numbers, while providing a "one-stop community" to improve English skills around.

Anthony Eric S. Son

From page H5

Back in 1992, even a computer driver who only finished grade school could speak English. Although his English was limited to simple sentences, they were correct. If he used Filipino at all, it was only to substitute single nouns or verbs.

Around 1993, I started to notice that we were having problems with sub-verse agreement. "Here are shoes in close." "Here's get closed to me. Get closed to God." "Reserve parking. If you parked here, you're are will be charge and you will be fine 1000 pesos."

Come 2000, and all hell broke loose!

I'm afraid I have no other advice but to ask you to abandon your college students. I think they're lovable, honest, as such the problem at the foundation—grade school and high school. I believe that having a good foundation in English is. Oh and life is much better than trying to be things in college.

Name withheld upon request

From page H1

Reading your article through makes me sadder because it seems to prove even more than both you and I are just beating our heads against the wall in wanting our students to enjoy English reading and writing... and to actually be good at it?

Unfortunately, as college courses, or years of English classes, for that matter, are highly unlikely to change the mindsets of our young people today.

Let's face it, Mr. Tolentino, children these days would rather play Angry Birds or Cut the Rope on their iPads than read a nice Beverly Cleary or Encyclopedia Brown book.

There are no nice public libraries in Metro Manila that I know of. Kids instinctively turn on the TV on weekends and are chained down by monotone shows with inane parlor games. They go to the mall where they are further dumbed down by arcade games.

Parents who want to chat/kids and encourage reading from an early age are a dying breed. In my daughter's school, parents actually bring their kids in the grade or weekends to play for hours so they can amass those "collectible cards" to show off to their classmates on Monday.

Then those same parents bemoan the lousy grammar and low grades that their kids get in English.

I think this problem is readily lessened ourselves.

A lover for reading and the English language doesn't start in the home, in childhood. The inflictions of parents who don't foster this or even make fun of the language themselves or willingly patronize linguistic incentive programs is impossible to undo—even through the existence of institutions of English teachers.

Add to that our current society, which places more emphasis on building malls and centers like those pairing up quality public libraries and museums.

And then we wonder why kids would rather have a nice round than read classic literature, or why "they would all scamper away in different directions like I had leprosy" when they see you coming.

I'm sorry to sound so negative, but years of disappointment have turned me into a cynic over the English skills of our youth.

I will totally understand should you change your mind and choose to save your reasonably inventive, DVDs and books instead.

In the meantime, I'm going to look at pictures of the cute children's section at the National Library of Singapore, with parents reading to their kids in their laps, and shed a few tears for the future of our poor Philippines.

Ready to have a ball

CAP the school year with a graduation ball to remember. Dressy shoes and chic dresses to wear to that festive night are spread out before you here because, believe us, you'll want to be gorgeous in the photographs that you'll be holding at with your kids years later.

SHORT dress with lace detail in the neckline from Freeway

ONE-SHOULDERED dress with bow detail from Ensembles, also available in white

SATIN long dress in apple green from Twenty Two BC, also available in red and aqua

EMPIRE cut sleeveless dress with rhinestone and chain details from Kashieca

SATIN corset dress with spaghetti straps from Freeway, also available in royal blue and fuschia

Ensembles, Freeway and Twenty Two BC are located in all major malls

SLEEVELESS dress in teal with chest cutouts and pleated top from Freeway

SHORT dress with tank in teal from Twenty Two BC, also available in cream

WHITE knee-length lace dress with bow belt from Twenty Two BC, also available in purple

BLING IT ON Pointy-patent heels and toe glitzers from Charles & Keith

LACED ROMANCE A romantic strappy pair in patent from Charles & Keith

Aldo's, Charles & Keith and Kashieca are located in all major malls

COLOR-BLOCKING platform pumps are made for fun evenings from Aldo's

FOR FAB outfits, dress pumps in leather with high-sheen finish, pointy toes and straight high heels, from Aldo's

HIGH GLAM in satin metallic from Charles & Keith

TRENDY platform pumps for fashion-savvy women from Aldo's